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Edited by PETER HUGH REED



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November, 1941

Editorial Notes

Compton Mackenzie, in the editorial in October's *Gramophone*, has some interesting things to say about Dvorak and his music. He expresses a high regard for Dvorak's *Quartet in G major*, Op. 106, which we recommended in our survey of the composer's music in the September issue. At the very moment that Mackenzie lamented the withdrawal of the Prague String Quartet recording of this work, he was able to welcome a new recording of it by the Menges Quartet. It is a pity that American listeners do not have a similar opportunity to welcome a new recording of the work at this time. Mackenzie particularly mentions the splendid *Adagio*, and notes that it "has the same kind of grave beauty as the first two movements of Schubert's great *C major Quintet*."

We cannot refrain from quoting more fully from Mr. Mackenzie's editorial, for he not only displays a fine appreciation of Dvorak, but he also pays an interesting tribute to the phonograph, or gramophone as they call it in England. We heartily concur with his assertion that "at a time like this when the spirit of Bohemia is enduring an intolerable exile these melodies of Dvorak gain an added poignancy." [He refers specifically to those tunes in the so-called "American" works, but what is said could well refer to those in many other works of the composer.] "The abuse of scientific progress by mankind," continues the writer, "has been so atrocious that there are moments when one could be forgiven for following the example of the Luddite rioters and smashing any machine at sight. One of the inventions that help to reconcile the mind and help it to believe that the sum total

of scientific achievement has done less harm than good to humanity is an invention like the gramophone. It would have been possible for Dvorak in 1904 to fancy upon his deathbed he built for himself with the aid of the gramophone that *monumentum aere perennius*, that monument more durable than bronze, to which artists since Horace have aspired, for by that date its achievements with the human voice had already forshadowed its achievement with instruments. Yet his wildest fancy could never have dreamed that in the centenary anniversary of his birth those nostalgic melodies written ten years earlier [the reference is again to the American works—the *New World Symphony*, the *Quintet*, Op. 97, and the *Quartet*, Op. 96] would half a century on from the date of their composition console the spirits of exiled fellow-countrymen and provide them with an assurance of their ultimate return to a free Bohemia. The most that once upon a time a composer of chamber music could hope was for the occasional performance of his most popular works by a skilled combination before a small and select audience. Thanks to the gramophone, chamber music can be enjoyed by the individual, and the effect of solitary listening upon individuals has yet to make itself felt in artistic development.

"I hope that when freedom sings again from Prague, and when the Moldau and Danube flow unsoiled by the ordure of Nazidom, the Prague Quartet will make another recording of that glorious *Quartet in G major* and play that song and hymn of thankfulness with which in the second movement Dvorak expressed his own gratitude for being home again in Bohemia."

Mackenzie's wish, we feel certain, is one the majority of our readers re-echo along with us. Speaking of Dvorak, it was a pleasant surprise to discover that Talich and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra had recorded Dvorak's first symphony (see *Overtures*). This was evidently accomplished during the last visit of the orchestra to England in 1939. Just how many similar surprises the English H. M.

V. Co. have in store for us we do not know, but we certainly hope there are many. The work is full of the joy of nature and of idyllic happiness. Of its slow movement, our friend W. R. Anderson writes: "it takes us on one of those woodland walks in which no companion is more congenial than this composer."

* * *

This being a year in which the musical world is paying tribute to Mozart (who died 150 years ago), we have thrown the spotlight this month on one of Mozart's closest associates in Vienna, Lorenzo da Ponte, who wrote the librettos for three of his most famous operas (*Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte*). Next month an article by Nathan Broder will appear. Mr. Broder, who contributed a thorough and scholarly essay entitled *Mozart and the "Clavier"* to the October issue of *The Musical Quarterly*, will recommend twelve works of Mozart that he believes should be in every record library.

Also scheduled for next month is an article that we have written in conjunction with the beloved American prima donna, Geraldine Farrar, in which the lady states her favorites among her own recordings, and the reason why she has selected them.

* * *

We wish to announce the acquisition of a new and important member to our editorial staff, Julius J. Spector. Mr. Spector is responsible for our new cover and the decorations which will be a permanent feature of *The American Music Lover*.

* * *

Owing to the uncertainty of record production, which in the past year has caused us to publish anywhere between the third and ninth of the month, we have found it necessary to drop our specific date of publication. Under the circumstances it is impossible to be out on the first. The companies are flooded with orders and are doing all they can to cooperate, but during the National Emergency it can be readily appreciated that their task is a greater one than it would be during normal times.



LORENZO DA PONTE

LIBRETTIST

CYR DE BRANT

"Anything is a good excuse for a Mozart opera", remarked a certain impresario recently when it was brought to his attention that August 17, 1938, marked the centenary of Lorenzo da Ponte's death in New York City. As a librettist of the late 18th century, da Ponte's name is generally associated with Mozart's. At the time, Mozart was perhaps the lesser figure but da Ponte helped to bring him before the public as an opera composer. A more perfect pair has never existed on the operatic stage. Da Ponte's feeling for the theatre and his poetic turn of phrase were clothed with a subtle musical expression whose deft touches emphasized still more pointedly the intentions of the librettist. If today the tables are turned, and the poet is known to the world and his memory kept alive wholly by the power of Mozart's music, these are circumstances that can detract but little from the share of immortality that da Ponte deserves.

Lorenzo da Ponte was a man who had lived with kings. After his years of glory

in Vienna he delighted to recount this brilliant phase of his career, often exaggerating and, it is said, even fabricating; but, be that as it may, he told it again and again to those who were willing to listen. If in fashionable London this story was able to arrest attention, in the pioneering era of the America of 1800 it equalled the wonders of a fairy tale. For a long time the urgings of his friends to write his memoirs fell on deaf ears but in the bleak hours of his more than thirty years in America, he turned to his reminiscences as a source of ready income and as pleasant reading for the classes in Italian that he was able to organize.

There was another reason that urged him to complete his memoirs. Da Ponte's classes were well attended because of his connections with many of the prominent citizens of New York City. For this reason he became the butt for the accusations of his rivals. They might attack him on the questionable incidents of his life, for some of the episodes were current talk among his compatriots. Defense was

necessary if he was to continue to enjoy the patronage of the fashionable circle that had accepted him. The Memoirs helped to explain some of these points in a more favorable light and to lessen the slander attached to those he chose to admit. While later investigation has found some of his statements false and has supplied some of the omissions, one would go far astray if only the erratic moments of his life were remembered. This man gave much to the world, saw its splendor, felt its poverty, and like his co-worker Mozart was buried in an unknown grave. Here are some of the highlights of his career, mostly as recounted by him.

Born near Venice

Lorenzo, the eldest son of the da Ponte family, was born March 10, 1749, in the Ghetto of Ceneda, one of the smaller towns of the Venetian Republic. Da Ponte, the family name, was assumed by the father when he and his sons were received into the Roman Catholic faith in 1763. It was not long before Lorenzo's talents were recognized but opportunities for an education were not at hand. Little was done until the Monsignor who baptized him took a deep interest in his future, which was directed towards the priesthood. His avidity for learning is brought out by an incident that occurred while he was in his teens. Not having enough money to buy the books he needed for study, he took the advice of the bookseller who suggested that some skins from his father's tannery would be acceptable for part payment. Lorenzo, in order to get the skins out of the house without detection, hid them under his clothes, assuming the deformity of a hunchback. As he made his way towards the bookshop he heard words of pity for the physical deformity of so fine a youth. But the words changed to laughter when the skins slipped from his clothing and he was recognized. His stepmother was told of the incident and both she and her husband were so angered that they refused Lorenzo not only the skins but the money needed. He was not long deprived of his books, however, for the kind Monsignor came to his rescue with the necessary money.

In due time he was admitted to the priestly state, although he was somewhat indifferent to the importance of his choice. Before long he was teaching at a seminary in Treviso. It was here that he first came into conflict with the authorities of the Venetian Republic. It was the custom at the end of the scholastic year for the master to prepare several essays, poems, etc., to be read in public by his pupils. One of the essays, which advocated democratic ideas, was brought to the attention of the authorities at Padua, who reported the matter to the Venetian Senate. The ecclesiastical authorities seem to have taken no notice of the incident, but, the ways of the dictator being no different in that era from what they are in this, evidence of a democratic spirit was looked upon by the state with disfavor. For his protection the young professor had to hasten to Venice. Here, before long, he succeeded in forming a friendship with Bernardo Memmo, a prominent citizen on whose influence he relied to save himself. The Memoirs give considerable space to his defense but the report savors considerably of self-praise. Before long the will of the Senate was made known. The decision demanded his dismissal from the seminary and forbade him to teach in any part of the Venetian territory. These orders were promptly carried out, so that da Ponte was stranded for the moment with no prospect but the possibility of a position as secretary should he remain in Venice.

Resides in the City

His decision to stay in the city required little time for he had spent many days there some years before and the prospect of a permanent residence was entirely to his liking. The gaiety, splendor, and easy living were in keeping with his nature and it was not long before he plunged into his old habits. The Memoirs, while alluding to many of these escapades, tend to pass over them lightly. Here he met Casanova, with whom he formed a friendship which was renewed often in later years. Before long he was in trouble again with the authorities because of a sonnet that satirized the Senate for passing over his friend and protector Bernardo Memmo in the

matter of an important appointment. This sonnet he gives as one of the causes of his banishment, but it is known he was also denounced for his shameless life. In 1779, warned by his friends, he hastily left the city.

The years before da Ponte arrived in Vienna were spent in Gorizia and Dresden.

In the first days of his exile he turned to the translating of two plays, one from the French and the other from the German. Although this was his first experience with the theater both of the works were produced shortly afterwards. While he was so engaged, Catarino Mazzola passed through the town on his way to Dresden, where he was to fill an appointment as poet to the royal court. Da Ponte begged his friend to find a position for him and Mazzola's generous promise raised his hopes.

An Arcadian Academy had been established at Gorizia by one of the prominent town poets, Giuseppe Colletti. To this body da Ponte was admitted when his talents were recognized. Jealousy was bound to appear between these two leading spirits and it is not surprising that da Ponte pictures Colletti as undeserving of his position and popularity. One day a letter purporting to be from Dresden and signed by Mazzola was handed da Ponte. It requested him to come to Dresden at once. There was a farewell banquet, with speeches exalting da Ponte's ability, and, as a friendly tribute, a sum of money was collected to help him defray the expenses of the journey. He left Gorizia in high spirits, and in due time arrived in Dresden, but to his chagrin he found himself appearing upon a scene in which he had no part. On seeking out Mazzola he found that his friend had sent no letter, that there was no position, and that the whole affair was a trick of his rival in Gorizia.

To Mazzola's credit, it can be said that he tried to help the new arrival out of

his predicament. Before long Lorenzo was assisting his friend in preparing the librettos that were required at the theater. Side by side they worked, da Ponte absorbing practical training in an art that was soon to make him famous. Since Mazzola was unable to find a position for his friend there was the danger of another unfortunate situation.



Da Ponte thought of trying his luck in Vienna. The solution of the problem was nearer than he thought but it came from an unexpected source. Lorenzo entered into a perplexing love affair with two daughters of an Italian painter. Things came to a point when the mother demanded that he make a choice within twenty-four hours.

Mazzola, who had news for his friend, found him at home thinking over his problem. Da Ponte's immediate trouble was overshadowed by a letter from his father which announced

the death of his brother. At the same time Mazzola read, in all good faith, a warning he received from Venice which told him to beware lest da Ponte replace him as court poet. In this trying hour Lorenzo resolved to quit Dresden and start anew. Armed with a letter to Antonio Salieri, the Court composer at Vienna, he bade adieu to the friend who had sheltered him, and given him the opening wedge to his future success.

When the wanderer arrived in Vienna, in the early part of 1781, Joseph II, the son of Maria Theresa, a patron of the arts and a musician of fine taste, reigned. Da Ponte, then in the prime of life, entered upon a decade that was to be the most eventful and glorious of his life. Handicapped at the beginning, since he did not know the German language or any of the German group through whom he could gain entrance to higher circles, he was at first despondent. His association with his own countrymen, however, unexpectedly brought him into contact with an

influential group. A poem on the subject of "Philemon and Baucis", which he dedicated to one of the nobles, came to the attention of the aged poet, Metastasio, who asked to see the author. This was a red-letter day in da Ponte's life; at last he was to be brought face to face with a man whose work he revered. Metastasio introduced him to the friends gathered in his house, began the reading of the poem, and bade Lorenzo continue. This was a cup brimming with happiness that was long remembered.

Although all this furthered da Ponte's reputation, it was of little value in the days of poverty that followed. Salieri's promise to assist him proved of little use, but when the Emperor made known his intention of opening an Italian theatre, da Ponte went boldly to Salieri to request the appointment. Da Ponte naively describes his first meeting with his patron, Joseph II. The sovereign set him at his ease, he tells us, and inquired into his early life and studies. Asked how many plays he had written, da Ponte replied, "None". Thereupon the monarch remarked: "We will have a virgin muse". In the joy of his audience and the appointment, da Ponte forgot his days of want, for as "Poet to the Italian Theater" he was promised 1200 florins a year. This began his first steps on the road to fame.

A Rival on the Scene

Hardly had his period of rejoicing ended when a powerful rival appeared in the person of Giambattista Casti, who came to Vienna after Metastasio's death in 1782, with the hope of obtaining the vacancy. Giovanni Paisiello was then passing through the city after a successful stay in St. Petersburg. Joseph II took advantage of the occasion to have Casti write a libretto for an opera with music by Paisiello. The success of this venture and the failure of a libretto by da Ponte presented shortly afterwards, set up rival factions in support of the two poets. Salieri, who wrote the music for the unsuccessful opera, was so angered by the failure that he vowed never again to set another libretto by da Ponte. In telling about the incident da Ponte praises the music of Paisiello and

points to the faults in the Casti libretto, seemingly in hopes of lessening the gravity of his own failure. In any case the illness of the leading singer, Anna Storace, caused a substitution at the last moment which was of little aid to the success of the project.

At this point there appeared on the scene Vincenzo Martin y Solar, also known as Martini, fresh from his triumphs at the Naples opera. Joseph II commissioned da Ponte to write a libretto for him and before long the successful *Il Barbero* was performed. This balanced the score between the two rivals. Before da Ponte completed the libretto he was the innocent victim of a painful incident. A surgeon chose to blame his own ill fortune in love on da Ponte, who was totally unaware of the matter. Lorenzo at the time suffered from a swelling of the gum and had the misfortune to mention the ailment to the surgeon in question. He was given a liquid to cure his ailing gum. After several days the swelling had gone but he was still in great pain. A friend recognized the liquid as aqua fortis. The harm had been done. Some of his teeth were already falling out, and before long he lost them all.

His Rival Fails Again

A month after the presentation of the Martin opera, Casti was given another opportunity to establish himself with the public. At a festival given in the Orangery at Schönbrunn, in honor of the Governor-General of the Netherlands, two operettas were presented. It must have been a merry evening in which the entertainment consisted of Mozart's *Schauspiel-direktor* and Salieri's *Le parole dopo la musica* with the witty script of Casti. If this was Salieri's opportunity to overshadow Mozart, it was also an occasion for Casti to satirize his rival. Michael Kelly, who sang the leading role of the Casti work, aped da Ponte's mannerisms of walk, pose, etc. This delighted the audience and the Emperor, who was not slow to recognize the singer's intent; and, strange to say, da Ponte himself seemed not to be offended. The importance of the occasion and the pronounced success

of Casti's libretto led his friends openly to seek an appointment for him. The request failed to meet with the approval of Joseph II and da Ponte was saved from his rival for the moment.

If Mozart and da Ponte were worsted in the evening at Schönbrunn, they did not give up the contest. Da Ponte proposed that they write an opera, and after some search for a subject Mozart suggested *Figaro*. Beaumarchais' play had been prohibited by the censor because of the political ideas developed in it. Da Ponte refused to let this hinder the project and promised to assume the responsibility for the performance. He gaily started on the libretto, which he claims to have finished in six weeks. Mozart, in one of his most inspired moods, wrote the music as fast as he could get the script from the librettist. Now came the greater difficulty of getting it performed.

The theater was then in need of a new work and da Ponte stole a march on his enemies by going directly to the Emperor to obtain his approval of the work. Mozart was summoned to the palace, where he played and sang the music, Joseph II showing more and more enthusiasm as he listened. The permission was granted and rehearsals began. Michael Kelly, who sang the role of Don Basilio, relates that the cast showed the same avid interest at the first general rehearsal. When Benucci sang "Cherubino, alla vittoria", those in the orchestra and on the stage were electrified and a noisy demonstration followed.

A Ballet Is Restored

When the final rehearsal neared, news reached Count Rosenberg, who was in charge of the theater and a member of the Casti clique, that a ballet was included in the score, which was against the Emperor's regulations. Da Ponte was sent for, the Emperor's will made known in the matter, and the pages were torn from the score. Mozart was in despair at the news and in his anger wanted to cancel the whole matter but da Ponte begged him to wait for a few days before making the step. Da Ponte went to the Emperor and requested the presence of his sovereign

at the final rehearsal without making known the reason. Joseph II gave his word, and on the day and hour appointed he appeared with the nobles of his court. The opera progressed with much applause but, at the end of the first Act, Susanna and the Count were seen to go through some dumb show while the orchestra played on. The incongruity of the situation immediately struck the Emperor. On learning the truth of the matter he gave orders to include the ballet. Before the end of the rehearsal the ballet was assembled and rehearsed as originally planned. All was in readiness for the première, which occurred in May, 1786. *Le Nozze di Figaro* was so successful that a decree was issued restricting encores. This triumph turned the swing of the pendulum in da Ponte's favor.

A Rival Is Vanquished

Despite the opera's success it was replaced after nine performances by *La Cosa Rara*, which was prepared by da Ponte for Martin. This was written on a promise from Martin that the name of the librettist should remain unknown until after the première. On the opening night the curiosity of the audience concerning the author of the libretto was aroused, but inquiries at the end of each of the first two acts remained unanswered. At the end of the third act, when the excitement was wildest and demands for the author were heard from all parts of the house, it was announced that Signor da Ponte was the man they sought. This was a moment of chagrin for Casti and his friends but one of delight for his rival. Da Ponte reached a high point of fame while Casti at the request of the Emperor withdrew from Vienna. Martin's charming music sent the crowds whistling and *La Cosa Rara* became the rage. The composer and librettist were feted everywhere while "à la Cosa Rara" became a tag for the styles and fancies of the day.

In the heat of success, da Ponte's services were in great demand.

He conceived the idea of writing three librettos at the same time in order to keep up with the demands on his services. He mentioned the project to Joseph II,

who advised caution, but in his eagerness the poet spoke of writing for Mozart at night, imagining himself reading Dante; for Martin in the morning, as though he were reading Petrarch; and for Salieri in the evening, which would be like reading Tasso. Martin's *L'arbore di Diana* was the first to be heard and its reception added to da Ponte's fame. He was off to Prague where with Mozart and his old friend Casanova he spent some convivial days before the première of *Don Giovanni*. An urgent call from Salieri demanded his immediate presence in Vienna for the completion of *Tatara*. It was here that the news of the successful performance of *Don Giovanni* reached him. Salieri, proud of the success of his own opera, tried to prevent a hearing of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in Vienna. A royal command interfered with his wishes and the opera was performed in May, 1788. Strange to say, it was accorded a cold reception. Joseph II remarked that it was too much for the teeth of his Viennese, to which Mozart replied, "Let us give them time to chew it."

Banished from Vienna

The last of the operas in which Mozart and da Ponte collaborated was given in 1790. Da Ponte passes over the work *Così fan tutte*, with a mere mention. Evidently he looked back to these times with regret, for here ended his days of glory. With the death of Joseph II, his sun set. Leopold, the new Emperor, showed scant appreciation of his talents and finally banished him from Vienna. Da Ponte lived in hope of a change of heart on the part of the Emperor but there was no reprieve. Sorrowfully and reluctantly he left Vienna as he had left Venice. In his Memoirs, the poet screens the reason for his banishment, which may have been caused by a libel against his sovereign.

Before long he turned up in Trieste, where he met Nancy Grahl, whom he subsequently married. Continuing on his way he stopped off to spend some time with Casanova. He dared not breathe a word of his marriage, so that even Casanova has proved a poor source of information

as to when it actually took place. Soon he headed for Paris, but because of the Revolution he avoided that city and finally arrived in London. Here he obtained a post at the Drury Lane Theatre, where he came into contact with some of his old friends, particularly Martin, for whom he wrote three other librettos. Here he ran a printing business also as well as a bookshop in the Haymarket. Eventually, troubles, caused by his carelessness in money matters, made it necessary for him to flee the country to avoid his creditors.

Thus ended da Ponte's career as a librettist. In leaving the Old World to come to America he cut himself free from his connections with the opera, which for over twenty years had been his very life. Before closing, it might be well briefly to touch upon his position in 18th-century opera.

A Product of His Time

A libretto of that day was not a copyrighted product held exclusively by one composer; it was often used without leave or license by other writers for the opera. With an earlier libretto as basic material, the poet might change the scenes, characters, etc., for dramatic reasons or to meet the demands of the occasion: *Orpheus*, for example, had numerous settings from the early days of Florentine opera to the historic presentation of Gluck. Da Ponte was a product of his time, and of the twenty-odd librettos he wrote for the operatic stage in Vienna and London there were but two or three that were original—prominent among these being the *Così fan tutte* of Mozart and *L'arbore di Diana* of Martin. As for the others, the *Marriage of Figaro* was based on a play of Beaumarchais; *Una Cosa Rara*, came from a Spanish comedy of Calderon; and *Don Giovanni* was based on a libretto of Bertati. Some of the less important ones were founded on Goldoni, Shakespeare, etc. In any case da Ponte's librettos were for the most part strengthened by his original touches and knowledge of stage convention. It is not surprising that they were the foundation for the masterworks of Salieri and Winter as well as Martin and Mozart.



COSÌ FAN TUTTE

SOME NOTES AND A REVIEW

On October 14, The New Opera Company opened in New York, with a performance of Mozart's "*Così fan tutte*," under the direction of Fritz Busch. The performance closely paralleled those that Busch directed for the Glyndebourne Festival in England for six seasons. The all-American cast was headed by Ina Souez (born in Denver), who sang the part under Dr. Busch's direction at Glyndebourne, and in the recording of the complete opera. Through the kind permission of Dr. Busch, the notes on the opera appearing in the program, written by his assistant, Ilya Laskoff, are reprinted here in an extended version made especially for us by Mr. Laskoff.

In opening its season with Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, ossia *la Scuola degli amanti**, The New Opera Company not only wishes to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the composer's death and pre-

sent what it believes is one of Mozart's finest operatic creations, but also to present it in its original Italian form, a version it feels to be unexcelled in any translation. Dr. Busch, directing performances of The New Opera Company, says in presenting the original score of da Ponte and Mozart with the *recitativo secco* that this is the most desirable way for the opera to be heard.

The story of *Così fan tutte* is said to be based on an actual happening in Viennese society. It is an *opera buffa* in its best form, with sham suicides and recoveries, false marriage contracts, and the servant playing the role first of doctor and then of lawyer. The Emperor Joseph

*The title is usually translated as *That's what they all do*, or *The School for Lovers*. Owing to the feminine inflection on the Italian word, *tutte*, which cannot be translated in English, the full meaning of the title is hard to convey in English. *That's what all women do* might be nearer the original; but Prof. Dent, who has made such faithful translations of the Mozart opera libretti, has suggested that the English title might be *The School for Lovers*.

It wished to see the story on the stage and told Lorenzo da Ponte to make it into a libretto for Mozart.

If da Ponte treated the score as a farce, and saw in it nothing more than a chance to make fun of love, Mozart found much more in the subject to awaken his interest. Here was an opportunity to show the world that in spite of poverty and failure, he was a composer of power and genius. The score is full of grace, tender love songs, and revelry and sparkle. Its deft fantasy and freshness is sufficient proof that Mozart gave himself over to it entirely.

Not Valued for a Long Time

For more than a hundred years *Così fan tutte* was either neglected or misunderstood. Some dared call it a mistake. Critics saw in it reminiscences of *Figaro* with some of the drollery of *Don Giovanni* thrown in for good measure. The discussions for and against the libretto still persist. With Beethoven at the head, the whole 19th century condemned the so-called immorality of the story. The adjectives "offensive" and "disgusting" were favorite epithets. The music, however, was greatly appreciated, and because the libretto was disfavored, the opera was revised in versions wherein the luckless libretto was altered. Many existent books of opera stories present a story which is quite alien to that by da Ponte. In England in 1828 and 1841 respectively, the theme of the tale was modified and presented under the titles—*Tit for Tat* and *The Retaliation*. In Paris in 1863, and again in Dresden in 1909, da Ponte was obliterated completely. In the French capital the opera was presented under the title of *Peines d'amour perdues*, the text being drawn from a translation of Shakespeare's *Love's Labors Lost*. In Dresden, however, the title was changed to *Die Dame Kobold*, the libretto being based on a Spanish comedy by Calderon.

If in *Figaro* one found an ingenuous world where laughter came easily and lightly, in *Don Giovanni* it was a sinful one where the necessity for redemption stood out like a sore thumb. With *Così fan tutte* we have still another world. Here, pretense becomes the truth. The charac-

ters exaggerate their despair and overdo their tears; they emphasize the expression of their joys and the declarations of their love, and succeed in duping themselves into believing their momentary passions. We are no better. They dupe us too. We jump at the opportunity that a transient emotion may become a stationary one. We want to believe it. The whole thing is a bit of ingenious stage artifice, to which Mozart has supplied an irresistible score. Perhaps, as Blom says in his book on Mozart, it is not a new world that we come into, however, but only a show of marionettes—yes, but a show that we like to take seriously. I am in disagreement with Blom when he says: "For nothing could be more ridiculous than to pretend that the preposterous people, the still more preposterous situations of this utterly artificial intrigue, were meant to be believed in, and nothing more absurd than to take da Ponte and Mozart to task for believing in them, which of course they never did." Blom is wrong in his last statement, for, as a matter of fact, it was only da Ponte who did not believe in the characters; Mozart took the story quite seriously. One must agree with Blom, however, when he adds: "The philistinism of the 19th century which professed to take umbrage at the story of the two girls who became enamoured of each other's lovers disguised as outlandish adventurers (a disguise which could not take in anybody for a moment) and which led either to the banishment of this fascinating work from the stage or to disastrous attempts at providing it with an expurgated libretto of some kind, was due to the confusion of moral and artistic values that was one of the gross immoralities of that century."

Becomes Popular At Last

Performances faithful to the original score of da Ponte and Mozart perhaps gained their greatest popularity with the public at the Glyndebourne Festival in England, under the direction of Fritz Busch, beginning in 1934, and remaining throughout its six seasons as one of its most distinguished productions.

To return for a moment to the story of *Così fan tutte*, which it would seem many people at various times have evidently

taken too seriously, the late Sir William H. Hadow has pointed out that no matter what we think of it, it holds our imagination. For, "on each successive event is concentrated everything that music can do, every appropriate device of rhythm and figure and orchestration; there is not a shade of feeling which lacks its natural expression . . . Even more striking is Mozart's treatment of the characters. . . though artificial they are wholly consistent."

And so, we see, when all is said and done, that it is the music that counts and not the story, and how fortunate it is that all of this has been captured and retained on records for the enjoyment of listeners

everywhere. Unquestionably, no better modern performance of this work could have been perpetuated than that which Fritz Busch planned and brought about at Glyndebourne in England. Hadow's assertion that "to the experienced critic as to the unsophisticated auditor, it is the music that comes first", has been borne out, not only by the universal acceptance and endorsement of the Glyndebourne recording of this opera, but by the enthusiastic reception accorded by critics and general public alike to the performances recently given under Fritz Busch's direction by The New Opera Company in New York.

—Ilya Laskoff.



MOZART: *Così fan tutte*—Opera in two acts; performed by the Glyndebourne Festival Opera Company 1935, under the direction of Fritz Busch. Victor sets M-812, seven discs, price \$7.50; M-813, seven discs, price \$7.50; M-814, six discs, price \$6.50.

▲ The cast in this recording is as follows: Fiordiligi — Ina Souez; Dorabella — Louise Helletsgrueber; Ferrando — Heddle Nash; Guglielmo — Willi Domgraf-Fassbaender; Don Alfonso — John Brownlee; Despina — Irene Eisinger; the Glyndebourne Mozart Festival Orchestra and Chorus.

This set first made its appearance in England in May, 1936. It was the second issue of the Mozart Opera Society—the first being *Le Nozze di Figaro*. The success of the Mozart festivals at Glyndebourne, under the admirable direction of Fritz Busch, gave England's leading recording company, His Master's Voice, an opportunity to obtain some made-to-order Mozart performances of an all-around excellence not always achieved even in the best opera houses. Busch, as well as Christy, the sponsor of the festival, being more interested in having competent singers than great stars, formed a company in which no singer stood out above another. Because of this, Glyndebourne became as famous for its ensemble as for its solo

singing. So famous was its teamwork, in fact, that the first album to emanate from there was given over merely to ensembles from *Figaro*. The public acclaim of this set prompted the recorders to follow it up with two more albums containing the solos from the same opera.

The success of the *Figaro* sets was followed by the present recording of *Così fan tutte*. Later came the Glyndebourne performance of *Don Giovanni*, and still later the Beecham performance—made in Berlin—of *The Magic Flute*. Of the three sets from Glyndebourne, the present has been praised as having the best all-around ensemble, an opinion in which we concur. Why this set was so long denied general release by its English sponsors to Victor in this country, is difficult to understand. In fact, exactly why any of the Mozart sets were issued primarily as Society sets becomes incomprehensible in the light of subsequent public acceptance and endorsement.

The same high standard of technical excellence obtained in the recordings of *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* is upheld here. The singers have been well chosen, and they acquit themselves with honor. Ina Souez, whose performance as Donna Anna has been widely commended, gives a well-rounded performance of the elder and more staid sister. This is a difficult part

to sing since the original singer for whom Mozart wrote the part seems to have had an unusual voice which partook of the characteristics of both a contralto and a soprano. It is but natural that Souez is more convincing in her natural range of the soprano. Louise Helletsgrueber, less opulently endowed as to voice, fits the character of the more susceptible sister satisfactorily; and Irene Eisinger, a Viennese, with her small light soprano, makes a charming Despina. Her style and sense of comedy are well suited to the part. The typical English tenor voice of Nash is quite the type one might expect to be cast for the part of the love-sick Ferrando; and the more practical Guglielmo is excellently sung by Willi Domgraf-Fassbender (previously heard as *Figaro*). The rather ungrateful role of Don Alfonso is allotted to John Brownlee, who makes the most of his meager opportunities.

But it is the direction of Fritz Busch which calls for the greatest praise. The rhythmic exactitude and confidence he achieves from his singers is most laudatory.

The playing of the orchestra too is marked by fine discipline and close attention to the delineation of detail and inner voices. One is always aware that the guiding spirit of the performance is that of the conductor.

The recording is not complete; some excisions have been made. A certain amount of recitativo has been cut, which in no case proves a grave omission. One regrets, however, the other excisions, particularly in so ambitious a recording of the opera as this one is. The duet of the brothers in the first act, *Ab fato dan legge*, is omitted, and so is the second-act tenor aria, *Ab lo veggio*. And the duet from the same act, *Fra gli amplessi*, is cut.

An excellent booklet is provided with the set, containing pertinent notes on the opera by Walter Legge, the full text (as sung on the records) in the original Italian and in an excellent translation by Faith Mackenzie. One marks this as a particularly worthy contribution to the recorded works of Mozart.

—P. H. R.

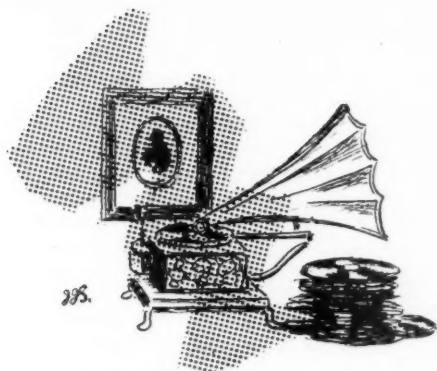
BOOK REVIEW

A TREASURY OF GILBERT AND SULLIVAN (102 Songs from Eleven Operettas). Edited by Deems Taylor; Illustrated by Lucille Corcos; Arrangements by Dr. Albert Sirmay. Simon and Schuster, 406 pp., price \$5.00.

▲ Here we have a handsomely got-up book that is a joy to own. Much care has gone into its preparation; the format is esthetically gratifying, the choice of songs is excellent, the illustrations are well conceived, and Mr. Taylor's notes are to the point. And, most important of all, the arrangements are the best I have ever seen. Dr. Sirmay has been careful to incorporate the melody in all cases, and thus one can play each selection without having to dub in the melodic line when no singer is around. Some of the songs are transposed to bring them within the range of the average voice, which is a godsend to this reviewer, who has perhaps the most despicable voice and the most limited

range ever inflicted on one who wants to sing but can't.

Naturally all Savoyards have their favorites, and no matter what choice is made, there is always bound to be some grumbling. My objection—indeed, the only objection I have to the book—centers around the fact that the great majority of the selections were chosen from the most popular operettas: 16 songs from *The Mikado*, 14 from *Pinafore*, 15 from *Iolanthe*, and 12 from *The Gondoliers* contrasted with 4 from *Princess Ida*, 5 from *Ruddigore*, and 4 from *Trial by Jury* (3 from *The Sorcerer*, 10 from *Penzance*, 10 from *Patience* and 9 from *the Yeomen of the Guard* complete the list). Not, mind you, that I in any way look down upon *The Mikado* or *Pinafore*, but too many people seem to be unaware that anything else exists, and this would have been an ideal place to demonstrate more plentifully the virtues of *Princess Ida* or the *Yeomen of the Guard*.



RECORD

COLLECTOR'S

CORNER

VOICES FROM THE GOLDEN AGE OF

OPERA, VOL. I: *Hamlet: O vin, discaccia la tristezza* (Thomas) Titta Ruffo, baritone; *Traviata: Ah! fors' è lui; Sempre libera* (Verdi) Marcella Sembrich, soprano (disc 18140); *Madama Butterfly: Un bel di vedremo* (Puccini) Geraldine Farrar, soprano; *Carmen: Air de la fleur* (Bizet) Charles Dalmores, tenor (disc 18141); *Tosca: Cantabile di Scarpia* (Puccini) Ant. Scotti, baritone; *Tannhäuser: Dich, teure Halle* (Wagner) Johanna Gadski, soprano (disc 18142); *Lucia di Lammermoor: Mad Scene* (Donizetti) Nellie Melba, soprano, with flute obbligato by John Lemmoné; *Le Caïd: Air du Tambour Major* (Thomas) Pol Plançon, basso (disc 18143); *Carmen: Habanera* (Bizet) Emma Calvé, soprano; *Ernani: O somno Carlo* (Verdi) Mattia Battistini, baritone, with Emilia Corsi, soprano, Luigi Colazza, tenor, Aristodemo Sillich, basso, and chorus (disc 18144). Victor set M-816, five discs, price \$5.50.

▲ If any proof were needed of the present interest in "historical" records, it would be furnished by this album. There

was a time, in the middle nineteen-twenties, when it was thought that the introduction of electrical recording had sounded the death-knell of all discs made by the old acoustical process. But some of us who had been brought up on the "canned" singing of earlier days soon found that modern methods of reproduction, and the greater realism that these methods made possible, could not always replace the artistry of singers no longer active. No matter how good the new records might be, mechanically and artistically, a work of art was still a work of art, and it was the performance of the artist that made it one. And so for years now there have been collectors ransacking the second-hand furniture stores, the Salvation Army and the St. Vincent de Paul Salvage Bureaus. Some collectors, to be sure, have been interested only in labels: a collection of modern re-pressings like the present Victor set would certainly not interest them, but I think the majority of us are more concerned with what we can hear on playing the disc than with its form or appearance. Some idea of the extent of the interest that exists in these

things may be gained from a consideration of the various clubs whose purpose is to bring to light and make available rare and unknown recordings of great and celebrated artists. The oldest of these, the International Record Collectors Club, has been in existence since 1932, and shows every sign today of active prosperity.

A Well-Chosen Set

The present collection has been carefully and well chosen to present a cross-section of the Victor red-seal catalogue of other years. Every old collector will miss some favorite artists, but he need only be reminded that this album is marked *Vol. 1*. While I would hardly be willing to concede that the record chosen is in every case the artist's best effort, I must admit that I was agreeably surprised to find some of them better than I had hoped. Every veteran knows well enough the habit Victor used to have of re-taking records—that is, of replacing existing recordings with new versions of the same music sung by the same artist, and slipping these into the catalogue under the same number and without any announcement of the change. In the present set there are several familiar selections which turn out to be different recordings from the ones I knew. Sembrich's *Ab! fors' è lui*, for example, is not the recording I have in the 1923 double-faced pressing. Happily, it is a better one. The voice is not so forward (which probably accounts for the preference being given to the other in the days of old-fashioned Victrolas) but the scale passages are even, the intonation is better, and the coloratura has more brilliancy. The Dalmores *Flower Song* is the 1907 version, probably because the 1912 recording was re-pressed a while ago for IRCC. In this case I prefer the later performance: in the singing there is little to choose, but the recording is fuller and smoother. Indeed the surface on the new issue is so uneven that it plays only with difficulty with a light pickup.

The Calvé *Habanera* was familiar to me in the piano-accompanied record, and this choice is a hard one. The voice is fuller here, but sweeter there. The tone-coloring in both is subtle, and each has tem-

perament and style. The tempo is a bit faster in the piano version. The Ruffo record is a spirited account of some not very important music, well calculated to show the splendor and virility of his voice. Farar and Scotti appear in perhaps their most celebrated rôles, and the Melba disc has plenty to show the younger generation about pure vocalism undefiled. Perhaps the most remarkable of all is the coloratura aria sung by the great basso Pol Plançon, whose voice was as nimble as a high soprano, and even found occasion to trill in this infectious trifle from a forgotten Thomas opera. Gadske's *Dich, teure Halle* sounds better in this pressing than in the old one I had (this is one undeniable advantage of these brand new copies) and her voice has the vitality and warmth I have always admired. This, however, is by no means her best recording.

In the Grand Manner

The Battistini selection is an impressive scene, and one that needs — and gets — singing in the grand manner. It is interesting to compare this 1909 recording with the one he made with a different group of collaborators in the early nineteen-twenties. But that time the baritone was in his sixties, but there is amazingly little deterioration noticeable in the singing. The earlier record has more spirit—he seems to be saving himself a bit in the later—and he had not yet developed the curious habit of attacking below a note, and sliding up to it as he swelled the volume. An irreplaceable feature of the newer disc, however, is the singing of one of the assisting artists (the soprano Isabella de Witt) who makes a diminuendo on a sustained high note that would cause anyone to sit up.

Collectors should be grateful to Victor for putting the recording date on the label of each selection (this would be an excellent procedure on all records, though I suppose it would be hard to convince the companies of that). There is also an extensive booklet giving details of the various artists' careers. The recording here is just what it always was—there has been no mechanical doctoring.

—P. M.

HAYDN: *My Mother Bids Me Bind My Hair*; and CHADWICK: *Love's Like a Summer Rose*; sung by Geraldine Farrar. I. R. C. C. disc No. 195, price \$2.25 (Autographed).

MOZART: *Les Noces de Figaro — Mon Gaule—Amour, que veux-tu moi?*; sung by coeur soupire; and LULLY: *Amadis de by Emma Calvé*. I. R. C. C. 10-inch disc 196, price \$1.75.

▲ Farrar recorded the Haydn song in January, 1911, and the Chadwick in December, 1912. We have always admired Miss Farrar's singing of the Haydn; not only is it a lesson in style but it is thoroughly imbued with the artist's charm. The Chadwick aria serves to show the singer's ability to make an innocuous piece of post-romanticism sound better than it is. The soprano was in fine voice when she made both these selections, and the recording did her justice.

The Calvé disc is a surprise. It should be a welcome one to all her admirers. Calvé's versatility is demonstrated here, and although Mozart never did sound well in French, it is to the singer's credit that her comprehension of the essential Mozartean style makes of her recording of the familiar aria of Cherubino, *Voi che sapete*, one of her most charming records. The Lully aria is also well sung, but this selection does not seem to come through quite as successfully as the Mozart. The singer recorded both these arias around 1919 in Paris, and, although she was in her middle fifties, her voice nonetheless had a richness and roundness of tone that belied her years. The surfaces on this disc are rather noisy, owing no doubt to the fact that these selections were re-recorded from other records.

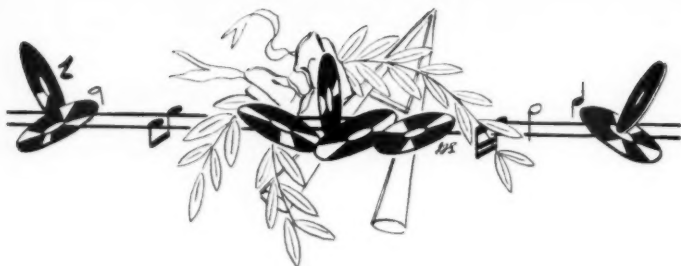
GOUNOD: *Romeo et Juliette—Ab! lève-toi*; and MASSENET: *Manon — Ab! fuyez, douce image*; sung by Lucien Muratore. I. R. C. C. 10-inch disc No. 198, \$1.75.

MOZART: *La Flûte enchantée — Isis c'est l'heure*; and HALEVY: *La Juive — Si la rigueur et la vengeance*; sung by Edward Lankow. I. R. C. C. 10-inch disc No. 199, price \$1.75.

▲ New York, they used to say, has Caruso, but Chicago has Muratore. The controversy as to which tenor had the better voice waged from 1913 until Caruso's death in 1921, when Muratore himself retired from opera. There is no doubt that Muratore was blessed with one of the greatest tenor voices of his time; his was undeniably the most sensuous voice of his day and his aristocracy of style classed him as the premier romantic tenor. Muratore was a famous Romeo and an equally impressive Des Grieux. He had a naturally robust voice to which he brought a suavity of vocal style that was indeed rare. His use of the mixed voice (head tone and falsetto) permitted him to obtain unusual effects. These recordings were made in 1917 by Pathé. The *Romeo* aria is sung complete without the recitative. The *Manon* has the recitative and only the first part of the aria, with the final bars put on for an effective ending. This disc definitely belongs in every record collection; it is a fine souvenir of the famous tenor, whom, it is said, Caruso refused to permit to appear at the Metropolitan during his time.

Lankow's voice was a famous one. He made his Metropolitan début in 1912 in the role of the High Priest in *The Magic Flute*. The richness and legendary sonority of Lankow's voice is excellently conveyed in these recordings. One can gain an excellent impression of his ability at characterization from these fine recordings. Although the basso had retired from opera when he made these recordings at Paris in 1927, he was still vocally in his prime.

Naturally in the process of re-recording not all surface noise could be removed, but the results obtained here are on the whole very good.



RECORD NOTES AND

REVIEWS

It is the purpose of this department to review monthly all worthwhile recordings. If at any time we happen to omit a record in which the reader is particularly interested, we shall be glad to give our opinion of the recording on written request. Correspondents are requested to enclose self-addressed stamped envelopes.

Orchestra

CHABRIER: *Espana — Rhapsody*; played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia disc 71250-D, price \$1.00.

▲ Beecham does here exactly what he did in his recordings of the suite from *Carmen* and the *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1*—that is, he makes of this overly familiar music a fresh musical experience. The subtlety and flexibility of the orchestral playing will make this work a joy even for those who may profess to be tired of it. There have been a half-dozen or more recordings of this work; the best of these in our estimation was the deftly phrased Gabrilowitsch performance (a souvenir of his artistic conducting) and the version made by Albert Wolff. Fiedler got the best recording to date; it even tops this fine recording, but Fiedler played the work more as a carnival scene than as a subtle, rhapsodic

treatment of Spanish tunes.

The reproduction ranks with the best of Beecham's discs, but if one's controls have been previously set for an American recording it will be found advisable (providing one can do it) to remove a little bass for the best reproduction of this record. In England they still put more bass into their recordings, owing no doubt to the fact that many people there still use the acoustic horn reproduction, which does not, like our phonographic equipment, have the means of restoring bass to the recording.

—P. H. R.

DVORAK: *Slavonic Dances, Op. 46, Nos. 1 and 3*; played by the Minneapolis Symphony, direction of Dimitri Mitropoulos. Columbia disc 11645-D, price \$1.00.

▲ The readings of these lovely dances are saved from being routine only by the conductor's command of his orchestra. I do not feel here the Czech flavor that Talich brings to them. Mitropoulos is crisp, and somewhat cold; he grows energetic at the proper moments, but does not fully convince. Perhaps none but a Czech or Slav can get across those infinitesimal variations in tempo that impart the authentic feeling; the present recording is a straight concert-hall presentation, played in the manner of a Beethoven symphony. The

music is worth owning however, and since there are many who like the Mitropoulos style, and the recording is full and clear, the disc is recommended.

—H. C. S.

ENESCO: *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A major, Op. 11*; played by the Philadelphia Orchestra, direction of Eugene Ormandy (disc 18201); and *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 2 in D major, Op. 11*; played by the National Symphony Orchestra, direction of Hans Kindler. Victor set M-830, two discs, price \$2.50.

▲ In September, Columbia issued a new recording of the first *Rhapsody*, played by Stock and the Chicago Symphony. Save for a diffusion of bass this was one of the finest recordings issued to date of the Chicago Orchestra. Stock's performance of this work was somewhat on the prosaic side, for his beat was almost too deliberate. To say that the performance was not an enjoyable one would be untrue, however, for it owns many recompensing features.

The older Ormandy version had qualities which to our mind were preferable. The new Ormandy version tops the old in many ways. In the first place it offers greater tonal nuance, and secondly the soloists of the Philadelphia are better than those of the Minneapolis. Ormandy's ideas about this work have changed somewhat with the years, but seemingly mostly to the good. His latest recording is more spirited and his choice of tempo is quite different than in the previous recording. There is a feeling of haste towards the end and some of the holds in the music are not sustained as they were in his first recording. To fit the music on a single disc, a cut was necessitated — section 25 to 29 in the score. But Ormandy plays the music excitingly and there is certainly more of a Roumanian flavor in his performance than in Stock's.

Enesco's *Roumanian Rhapsodies* are based upon folk material of his native land; only the first, however, is boisterous and invigorating. As the annotator says, the second is, save for a tiny dance-like section at the end, of a sentimental genre. It opens with a broad song for the strings, which curiously recalls the Mexican popular song *La Paloma Azul* recorded by Chavez in Columbia set M-414. The middle sec-

tion brings some quasi-oriental effects for the woodwinds, and then the first tune returns more elaborately orchestrated. This work lacks the punch and spirit of the first *Rhapsody*. Kindler's performance of it is good, on the whole, although we feel the main melody could have been treated with a little more fluidity; but it will be valued nevertheless by all who admire the music, which is if nothing else a decided contrast to the other work. The recording here is good, although the quality of tone is not as fine as in the Philadelphia record.

—P. H. R.

KALINNIKOV: *Symphony No. 1 in G minor*; played by the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, direction Fabien Sevitzky. Victor set M-827, four discs, price \$4.50.

▲ This is the only work of Kalinnikov that is played today—and it is heard infrequently. Some years ago it achieved a brief popularity; several radio orchestras played it, and it was featured by at least two orchestras in the concert hall. Most of the critics, however, were quite unkind to the symphony, and it seems to have dropped out of the repertoire. Critical objections, as I remember them, centered around the facts that the music was too slight, that it was often banal, and that it did not possess the individuality and directness of purpose that all great music should have.

I am ready to concede the latter point, but I, for one, have always enjoyed the work, and believe that most listeners—especially those who favor Russian music—will. This symphony must be recommended especially to those whose knowledge of music is still in the formative stage. Not that more sophisticated listeners will find it empty, but the score will pose no problems to the initiate. The structure is slender, and while it follows the usual pattern of a post-Beethoven symphony—four movements, the first in sonata form—the effect of the whole is almost of a collection of Russian folk tunes. Even the development sections are ultra-melodious; the personality of the composer is hardly felt, and there are no irritating mannerisms. Thus one will not tire of the work too easily.

Kalinnikov (1866-1901) wrote the sym-

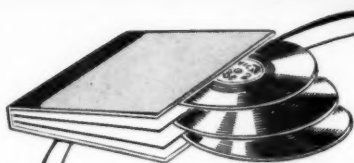
phony in 1896, at which time he was threatened with a fatal disease. Not a trace of personal melancholy is felt, however; the work is as objective as a Mendelssohn symphony (the composer is sometimes vaguely referred to as a Russian Mendelssohn). Whatever sadness in the score is due to the inevitable undertones that characterize Slavic melody. The first two movements are full of that quality, but the mood is never morbid, and there is a lyrical, almost feminine, bent that is highly attractive. As a contrast the vigorous third movement, recalling the utterances of Borodin and the early Tchaikowsky, owns a dancelike quality that stems from the soil. There are some hidden subtleties in the finale that are fortunately mentioned in the notes accompanying the set.

Sevitzky has the field to himself in this first recording. His interpretation is in good taste and he has a fine command over his men. Certain details are in some cases questionable: in my opinion he could have shaped the very opening measures to greater advantage, his tempo is a little too fast, and he maintains a too-steady, unvarying beat. In the sharp rhythms of the third and last movements this treatment meets with no little success; in the others one could expect more differentiation. The recording is excellent on the whole, although some of the climaxes, especially that on the last side, tend towards harshness and stridency. With the exception of the third side, the surfaces of the review set were smooth.

—H. C. S.

KODALY: *Dances from Galanta*; played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra, direction Arthur Fiedler. Victor set M-834, two discs, price \$2.50.

▲ These dances were especially composed for the eightieth anniversary of the Budapest Philharmonic Society in 1934. They are, to a large extent, lively and atmospheric, with more than a hint of oriental modality. Many listeners will be reminded of Enesco's *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1*; here is the same drive and a similar alternation of gay and melancholy folk material. The last disc of these *Dances from Galanta* (Galanta is a small town in



A Musical

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AND OHESTR



Concerto No. 1, in B Flat Minor
Vladimir Horowitz with Arturo
Toscanini and the NBC Symphony
Orchestra

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Hungary, where the composer passed seven years of his boyhood) is perfectly captivating, and will give a new slant on the subject to people whose ideas of Hungarian music have been formed from the Brahms dances and Liszt rhapsodies. On the last side the orchestra kicks up its heels, and the listener wants to follow suit. This is the dancingest music I have heard in a long time: fresh, vital, colorfully scored, and right down to earth.

The recording is a little overloaded, and could stand more bass. In loud passages there is some shrillness and diffusion of tone which necessitates considerable manipulation of the volume controls to prevent distortion.

— H. C. S.

LISZT (arr. Stokowski): *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*; played by the All-American Orchestra, dir. Stokowski. Columbia disc 11646-D, price \$1.00.

▲ Incredible but true: the most recent Columbia catalogue does not list an orchestral version of this favorite. Indeed, the only other domestic version available is Stokowski's Victor pressing on 14422. The latter is a magnificent recording, but so is the present, though it is neither as mellow nor as well balanced. This one owns, however, the added feature of some familiar Stokowskian flourishes. Not many take the *Second Rhapsody* very seriously today, and although the conductor has his own quaint notions about the score few will raise the cry of sacrilege. Let us call it a concert adaptation and let it go at that. I think that Liszt, who wrote the original as a pianistic showpiece, would have approved of the effects Stokowski has introduced.

—H. C. S.

MOUSSORGSKY: *Persian Dance* from *Khovantchina*; played by the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony, direction of Howard Barlow. Columbia 10-inch disc 17286-D, price \$.75.

▲ The only previous recording was the old one by Coates and the London Philharmonic. Naturally the present version supersedes it. As music, it does not measure up to the *Prelude* of the same opera. *Khovantchina*, which was completed in 1882, is, in the opinion of most critics, an uneven score. Rimsky-Korsakoff or-

chestrated the entire work, and here is found the Oriental local color and penchant for exotic flavoring that all of the Russian Five at one time or another indulged in.

—H. C. S.

PROKOFIEFF: *Peter and the Wolf*; played by the All-American Youth Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski, with Basil Rathbone as narrator. Columbia set M-477, three discs, \$3.50.

▲ Listening to this music, I was suddenly struck by the fact that Prokofieff, consciously or otherwise, was following the precepts of another great modern composer and achieving more success at it than the originator himself. It was Hindemith who introduced the concept of *Gebrauchsmusik*—music that plays a definite part in the average man's life; music in which he himself can participate and which is intelligible to him—; but Hindemith, master though he is, has never become popular with the average music lover. *Peter and the Wolf* is a far better example of the German's theories than anything he himself composed. The music serves a utilitarian purpose, but manages to be good despite the fact that it was written for the musical instruction of children. There is no need here to dwell on its virtues in that respect; a social message also is implied, which discerning listeners will obtain from the text. It is with the merits of the music that we are concerned, and few will deny that the score is one of the most entertaining that has been written in this century. Prokofieff does not play down to his audience; the music is instantly grasped by children, but adults can find imaginative touches in abundance, and need not condescend to enjoy them, for the music is anything but obvious.

Koussevitzky's performance of this work with Richard Hale as narrator has been a favorite ever since it was released in August, 1939. Stokowski, as was to be expected, has a slightly different approach. Many of his phrasings are different, and some of his details seem to me to be superior, as for instance the episode of the quarrel between the cat and the duck, which is more humorously conveyed here.

On the whole I think that Koussevitzky is more subtle, though Stokowski does good work throughout and heavily emphasizes the more obviously humorous parts. As a matter of fact, it would be difficult to give a poor performance; if ever music played itself it is *Peter*, and it would be a singularly inept conductor who failed to capitalize on its opportunities. Whatever his faults, Stokowski is never dull. Here he has been accorded brilliant recording, and the orchestral definition is even better than in the Victor set.

It is the quality of the narrators' approach that makes the difference between the sets staggering. Between the voices of Hale and Rathbone is the void between Hamlet and Jack Point. Hale used a mock heroic intensity which was irresistible when expressed by his great, booming bass. He tore a passion to tatters; his voice quivered and broke and was horrified and exultant in turn. He was reminiscent of a ham actor doing *King Lear*, and since his "hamminess" was a carefully calculated product, the result was delicious. I am told that children, who could not catch that quality, were actually frightened, and I can well believe that. If parents wish to keep that set away from impressionable children, the new version is the answer, for Rathbone's pleasant, well-modulated voice is sugary and polite. His approach is intelligent enough, but he does play down a bit, and youngsters might well get more out of his rendition. But Hale is the man for my money, and I think for most adults.

—H. C. S.

RAVEL: *La Valse* (3 sides); and **DEBUS-SY:** *Petite Suite — Ballet*; played by the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York, direction of John Barbirolli. Columbia set X-207, two discs, price \$2.50.

▲ Although Barbirolli has a better orchestra at his command than Monteux did last month, the interpretative honors for this music go to Monteux. The Frenchman understands and feels the Gallic qualities of the music better and his performance shows a far more assiduous attention to detail. Barbirolli often drives the music and his reading is frequently disjointed, as

though it had been planned in sections rather than as a whole. The poignant note of tragic irony is also less apparent in this performance.

The recording here is full and lifelike, almost too powerful at times. It may well be that some will be greatly impressed by the reproduction as well as by the surging drive of the conductor, which it must be admitted often creates exhilarating effects. But my advice to all listeners would be to hear both the Monteux and the Barbirolli versions; there is plenty of excitement in the Frenchman's performance and a far better sense of continuity (a clearer understanding of the relationship of the different sections of the score) and the reproduction is realistically contrived even though it does not achieve quite the loudness that the present set does.

The filler-in is a better chosen one than Monteux's, but it is less satisfactorily recorded. It is the fourth movement of Debussy's suite for piano, four hands, undoubtedly played in the orchestral version by Henri Büsser, although the label does not supply this information. —P. H. R.

SCHUMANN: *Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120*; played by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, direction of Frederick Stock. Columbia set M-475, three discs, price \$3.50.

▲ There is depth and glow in Stock's performance of this work, due as much to the dark quality that this orchestra has in recording as to the conductor's direction. The Walter set listed in the Columbia catalogue dates back over a dozen years, and hence is lacking in the nuance and dynamics obtained in the present set and also in Ormandy's, made in 1934. Walter re-recorded this symphony with the Vienna Philharmonic in 1939, but Victor has never seen fit to bring it out.

Stock treats this symphony as more of an entity than Ormandy, and does not intensify its contrasts as sharply. One perceives this immediately in the *lento* introduction to the first movement. Stock leans towards the tenderness of the composer, while Ormandy makes much of the

boldness and contrast in the music. There is greater clarity of instrumentation in the Ormandy first movement; particularly is this true in the development section, where the violins in the Stock set dominate and the horn and trombone themes are completely submerged. One questions the sudden *accelerando* which Stock uses near the end of this movement, since it is not indicated in the score.

The solo playing (oboe and first violin) in the slow movement emerges more clearly in Stock's performance, and here is really heard. There is much to be said for Stock's affectionate shaping of this music. In the scherzo the playing in the first violins is not as clean as in the Ormandy set; and in the opening of the finale, one of the loveliest passages in the entire work, Ormandy's precision and sense of contrast serve him better than does Stock's leisurely playing. But Stock is enormously assisted by the superiority of modern recording. And from this standpoint, his set definitely takes the lead, despite the lapses in instrumental clarity mentioned above.

Since the surface level on the present set is lower than in the Ormandy, it is unfortunate that the recorders did not avoid the swishes in the first movement and the scratch level apparent in the slow movement. But all in all, this is one of the best recordings from the Chicago Symphony issued to date.

Schumann's *Fourth* was actually his second symphony in order of composition. There is a greater unity in this work than in any of the other symphonies, although it does not achieve the high mark of the *Symphony in C major, Op. 61*. But here one feels more strongly the presence of Schumann the song-writer, and the lyrical Romance is among his finest symphonic movements. The tonal richness and warmth of this work gives it a more instant appeal than the others. I have never been convinced that it should be played without interruption as the composer planned it, and since the rests between movements are marked with a hold the termination of each movement at the end of a record works out very well. —P. H. R.

SMYTH: *Two Interlinked French Folk Melodies*; and *Minuet* from *Fete Galante*; played by the Light Symphony Orchestra, direction Sir Adrian Boult. Victor disc 18155, price \$1.00.

▲ Dame Ethel Mary Smyth has achieved fame as England's greatest woman composer. Her works are seldom played in this country, and it would appear that those above mark her first appearance in any domestic record catalogue. Neither of the compositions is of any moment; the *Minuet* is pleasant but totally undistinguished, and the folk melodies are treated with due respect for their simple character. The latter is the better of the two selections. I cannot forbear quoting Percy Scholes' remarks about the composer: "She is the daughter of an artillery general and always ready to fire a shot in the interests of any cause she considers good, ever putting a special fervor into any fighting she may decide to undertake in behalf of national opera or feminism. . . . It is the opinion of some that had she been a man she would have been enabled more quickly to make her mark as a composer, and of others that she would with difficulty have made it at all. It is perhaps fair to consider that these views cancel out, leaving sex as no important factor in the sum."

—H. C. S.

STRAUSS: *Don Juan, Op. 20*; played by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, direction of Fritz Reiner. Columbia set X-190, two discs, price \$2.50.

▲ This set obviously replaces the one made by Bruno Walter more than a dozen years ago and still included in the Columbia catalogue. The last recording of *Don Juan* was the Fritz Busch version issued by Victor in 1937. As a recording this set is a great advancement over the Busch, and the best phonographic representation to date of the Pittsburgh Symphony. It is a powerful recording of a brilliant and incisive reading of the work. Reiner succeeds in making the dramatic passages of the work more exciting than did any of his predecessors, but in the sentimental moments he tends to relate Strauss closer to Liszt than Busch did. But the sweep and intensity of Reiner's read-

ing on the whole and the superbly disciplined playing of the Pittsburgh orchestra will undoubtedly place this set in the forefront for most listeners. Yet there is still much to be said for Busch's set; there the playing is often smoother and more polished and Busch undeniably had better solo players than has Reiner.

Strauss' own performance of this work, made around 1930 for Polydor and later issued here by Brunswick, is still, to my mind, the best reading of the work ever recorded. There is an interesting history to that set: the composer was permitted to re-record the various sides of the works he did at that time until he got the results he wished. Such recording privileges today, in a union-dominated musical world, would be impossible except at an enormous expense which could in no way, I feel certain, be later justified by sales. The Strauss version on a modern machine that permits removal of the excessive bass in the recording reproduces magnificently and shows Strauss' remarkable abilities as a conductor. But Strauss did not achieve the bite in the opening of this work or the same intensity and fervor that Reiner obtains in latter passages, and although Reiner's treatment borders very closely on the sensational it is to his credit as an artist that he never crosses that border.

The surfaces of this set are on the whole good, but the rest before the coda at the end of the work reminds us that there can be undesirable needle scratch where it is least wanted.

—P. H. R.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64*; played by the Philadelphia Orchestra, direction of Eugene Ormandy. Victor set M-828, five discs, price \$5.50.

▲ Obviously this set is intended as a modern replacement of the Stokowski one, issued in April, 1935. Ormandy's well-disciplined performance of this work offers a tremendous contrast to Stokowski's lushly melodramatic reading. True, Stokowski frequently obtained more highly polished tone from the same orchestra, but he did not give us the continuous tonal flow that Ormandy obtains. And Stokowski's consistent exaggeration of detail and

orchestral balance is not indulged in by Ormandy, although the latter has some individual ideas about rubato and adopts a sudden burst of speed at the end of the first movement. I must say that I appreciate hearing the woodwinds of the Philadelphia Orchestra in the same relation to the rest of the instruments as I have heard them in the concert hall.

As a recording this set takes its place as the finest of this symphony extant. I am not forgetting the well-sounding Rodzinski version, or the richly lifelike Beecham set. But it seems to me, as we previously stated, that the criterion of all modern orchestral recording might well be established on the basis of those Philadelphia Orchestra sets that have been issued in the past two years. It seems unfortunate in view of this fact that quieter surfaces were not obtained here.

Ormandy's conception of this symphony seems to lie between Rodzinski's and Beecham's. Rodzinski's reading was more robust and more deliberate in its dramatic unfoldment. Beecham's was more subtle, more nuanced and fine-grained. Particularly admirable is Ormandy's substantiation of the flow of the music, and if he does not succeed in making the *Andante cantabile* quite as memorable as Beecham did, his playing of this movement is nonetheless exceptional. As I have previously stated, there is room for more than one reading on records of the great works of music. The spacing of this recording practically parallels that of the Beecham: three sides each for the first and second movements, one side and a half for the third and the balance given over to the finale, which it may be observed is played without the cuts made in the Rodzinski and Mengelberg

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versions. The listener now has three modern recordings of this work from which to make his choice. —P. H. R.

WAGNER: *Ride of the Valkyries* from *The Valkyrie*; and *Lobengrin* — *Prelude to Act 3*; played by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, direction of Fritz Reiner. Columbia disc 11644-D, \$1.00.

▲ Columbia's last recording of the *Ride of the Valkyries* was made at Bayreuth around 1929. It still is one of the most remarkable recordings of its kind, and since it was recorded as sung in the opera, the disc is somewhat unique. It seems strange that a single-disc recording of this popular Wagnerian excerpt has not been made in the past decade by any of the leading Wagnerian conductors.

Reiner plays both the *Ride* and the *Introduction to Act 3* of *Lobengrin* with an overly incisive beat, and there is a certain unyielding stiffness to both performances. It's all very brilliant but not nearly as expressive as it might have been. Too, the recording is extremely powerful, and it may prove difficult to reproduce on some sets, despite the fact that it is tonally realistic. —P. G.



Concerto

MOZART: *Horn Concerto No. 3, in E-flat major, K. 447*; played by Aubrey Brain, horn, with the B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra; Sir Adrian Boult, conductor. Victor set M-829, two discs, \$2.50.

▲ This delightful work is one of four horn concertos composed by Mozart for an old family friend, Ignaz Leutgeb. This worthy must have been a more than ordinarily gifted virtuoso, for he traveled from his native Salzburg through Germany and Italy, and is known to have performed a concerto of his own in Paris. He finally

settled down, however, in Vienna, as a cheesemonger. It was after he had established himself thus (he did not retire from public appearances) that Mozart enriched his repertoire, and that of horn players ever since, with the present work and its three companions. The *E-flat Concerto* is said to date from about 1783, although on this point there can be no certainty. But one thing cannot be questioned: the music is in Mozart's happiest vein, combining maturity of workmanship with youthful and exuberant inspiration. How he succeeded in producing so many compositions in the same form and style remains one of the cardinal mysteries of his genius. To have written concertos for so wide a variety of instruments as he did—and many of them, like the horn, instruments which he did not himself play—and to have made each of them so individual that the hearer who knows a number of the others will still find a new pleasure, is one of Mozart's matchless achievements.

In our time England has certainly been the land of wind instrument virtuosi. And among the fine artists whose playing of these instruments has come to us by way of recordings none has given us more to be thankful for than Aubrey Brain. The mellowness and fluidity of his tone are things at which we marvel, but of which we never tire. His playing is musicianly and, except on very rare occasions, clean (even so great a horn player as he is not always able to avoid a slip). The accompaniment of the B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra under Sir Adrian Boult, and the full, satisfactory quality of the recording are up to standard. —P. M.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op. 23*; played by Vladimir Horowitz and the NBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Arturo Toscanini. Victor set M-800, four discs, \$4.50.

▲ Unfortunately, this set arrived much too late for review. We managed a hasty hearing on a small machine and were impressed by the recording, which appears to carry on the tradition set by the Brahms second concerto. Also apparent was the fact that Horowitz is in fine technical form, and that Toscanini superably seconds

him. From that aspect the set obviously is superior to both of its predecessors — Rubinstein's and Petri's. But a set like Rubinstein's of the B flat Tchaikovsky, which has been one of the most popular in the history of recorded music, cannot be dismissed lightly, and next month we shall be in a better position to present a more detailed comparison between that and the new one.

—H. C. S.



Chamber Music

COOLIDGE: *Quartet in E minor*; played by the Coolidge Quartet. Victor set M-719, three discs, price \$3.50.

▲ No patron of music in America has done more for the promulgation of chamber music than Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. The Foundation she established at Washington, D. C., in 1935, administered by the Library of Congress, "is especially concerned with the furtherance of chamber music via a series of music festivals at which the past and present are both well represented". At present the Budapest Quartet is being sponsored by the Library of Congress (through this Foundation) in a series of Sunday morning broadcasts of all the Beethoven quartets and some of that composer's trios. Mrs. Coolidge has commissioned compositions from almost all the greatest contemporary figures in music, both in this country and in Europe.

The Coolidge String Quartet is another one of this extraordinary lady's contributions to the cause of chamber music in this country. And, behind the issuance of many recordings by this ensemble, one recognizes the spirit and will of this worthy patron of music.

As a composer, Mrs. Coolidge reveals herself as a sensitive and economic artist. One admires her feeling for lyricism and poetic tenderness. The work shows individuality. Placing this quartet next to the Berezowsky (which the Coolidge Quar-

ter has recorded) and against such works as the Piston and Sessions quartets which have recently found their way onto records, one is struck by the fact that here is a contemporary composer who does not stress technical ingenuity at the expense of emotional sensibility.

The opening subject of the first movement, a singularly malleable as well as effective theme, is the keynote of the whole composition; from it the whole work grows. The theme that forms the basis

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for the second movement (*Funeral Lament*) is derived from it; while the third movement (*Divertimento*) is fundamentally a series of variations on this tune, and the subject of the final fugato is also a derivation of it. There is a strongly introspective quality in this music, as though the composer at times were remembering past events and experiences as in a dream. Those who value serenity in music will find that this quality prevails in the quartet, perhaps as much to its disadvantage as to its advantage. For one cannot help feeling that more robust contrast would have done much for this score.

The Coolidge Quartet gives a technically smooth and expressive performance of this work, despite some acerbic playing on the part of the first violinist. The recording is effectively contrived. —P. H. R.

HANDEL (arr. Feuermann): *Adagio* and *Allegro* from *Organ Concerto in G minor*; played by Emanuel Feuermann, cello, accompanied by Franz Rupp. Victor disc 18154, price \$1.00.

▲ Feuermann has made effective transcriptions here. The music has dignity as well as a melodic quality that is suited to the cello, and there are none of the wrenchings and creakings that sometimes make minor monstrosities out of arrangements. Adapted from one of the more popular organ concertos (*Op. 4, No. 1*), the *adagio* owns a typically broad and flowing Handelian theme, while the *allegro* is buoyant and possessed of the solid, hearty characteristics of its composer. Naturally Feuermann has seen to it that he is afforded plenty of chances for technical display. The recording is realistic, and the balance with Rupp's admirable accompaniment is well maintained. There is one place where the cellist is decidedly off pitch; otherwise all is fleetness and light. —H. C. S.

MOZART: *Duo No. 2, in B-flat major, K. 424*; played by Jascha Heifetz, violin, and William Primrose, viola. Victor set M-831, five sides, price \$3.00.

▲ In the two duos which Mozart wrote in 1783 for violin and viola we have the curious spectacle of one of the greatest

of composers ghost-writing for a friend. Michael Haydn, the younger brother of the great Joseph, had been commissioned to compose these duets by the Archbishop of Salzburg, but he was too ill to fill the order. Mozart, ever willing to oblige, produced the needed music, allowing the two works to be delivered to the Archbishop as compositions of Haydn. We are told that the style of the duos is an assimilation of that of the supposed composer, but this most of us must take for granted, since Michael Haydn is no more than a name to the music lover of today. The statement is not difficult to believe, however, for the general impression created by the work is somehow not quite Mozartean. Its similarity to the true Mozart style would be quite as natural had the *Duo* been the work of some other contemporary — for the music of every age has its common characteristics. Mozart is said to have considered Michael Haydn an excellent master of counterpoint. This probably accounts for the interesting and charming imitations in a couple of the variations which form the finale of this work. But on the whole, it seems to me that in suppressing his own style in favor of that of his friend, Mozart has created music by no means devoid of charm, but hardly so full of it as when he spoke for himself. The variations, I ought to add, are greatly admired, though for my own part I find them a little tiresome. Mozart has written better themes, and, aside from the contrapuntal ones, more striking variations.

This work was recorded years ago for Columbia by Simon Goldberg and Paul Hindemith. I have only a dim recollection of that set, but I suspect that there was more of the authentic style and grace in the performance than Heifetz and Primrose have captured. On the other hand I am quite sure that the new recording is mechanically far superior. The two distinguished virtuosi of the new set are rather too free with their rubato, and Heifetz is not above an occasionally overdone portamento. Perhaps by keeping it simpler they could have done more to convince us that Mozart was not mistaken in his great admiration for Michael Haydn's talent. —P. M.

SALESKI: *Suite in Olden Style*; played by H. Nosco, R. Bolognini, H. Glickman, H. Saleski, violins; C. Cooley, viola; Gdal Saleski, cello; and P. Sklar, bass. Asch Record No. 1000, price \$1.25.

▲ This suite was first conceived as a string quartet and introduced to the public by the Pro Arte String Quartet at Mills College in Oakland, California, in 1933. Later its composer, Gdal Saleski, arranged it for string orchestra. Dr. Frank Black and the N B C String Symphony have played the work on the air.

This is intended to recapture the spirit of the period of Bach, Handel, Vivaldi, etc. Like Stoessel's *Suite Antique*, which the United States Record Co. released over a year ago, the present suite is effectively and spontaneously written, despite its conventional patterns. Its four movements are: Prelude, Gavotte, Sarabande, and Gigue.

The performance is an excellent one. Most of the musicians engaged in it are associated with the NBC String Symphony. From the reproductive standpoint the tonal quality and balance of the strings have been handled well. —P. G.



Keyboard

BACH: *Art of the Fugue (Die Kunst der Fuge)*; played by E. Power Biggs on the Baroque Organ in the Germanic Museum of Harvard University. Victor sets M-832, four discs, price \$4.50; and M-833, six discs, price \$6.50.

▲ *The Art of the Fugue* is the greatest intellectual triumph ever achieved by any composer; it is also one of the greatest pieces of music ever written. I might also add that it is one of the most difficult to understand, and will repay literally years of study. It is doubtful whether a music lover without a knowledge of form can ever fully plumb its mysteries. As in most

of Bach's larger works, the elements of melody and a universal emotional feeling are present — sometimes overpoweringly so; and many listeners will respond to that aspect and manage to derive much from the music. But in the long run, it is what Bach does with his material that will continue to amaze. Following the music with a score will reveal things that might be passed over otherwise; only one with at least a smattering of counterpoint could appreciate the technical wonders of a *tour de force* like the mirror fugues. At a first hearing, much of the work may appear to be dry and formal; I know that was my first impression when I originally heard it, and not until very many hearings and much study did it begin to take hold. It is true of this more than of any other piece of music that it will repay whatever effort the hearer puts into it, and it might be well for the buyer to consider this fact before purchasing. *The Art*

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of the *Fugue* is definitely not for beginners.

Perhaps it would be well to summarize the important facts concerning its composition. Bach worked on it almost to the day of his death. Before he died, the greater part of the music had been engraved under his supervision by an unknown publisher. *Contrapunctus XIX* comes to us unfinished; the manuscript ends shortly after the section where Bach introduced the letters of his own name preparatory to working them into a triple fugue (B is B-flat and H is B-natural in German). The publisher closed the work with the master's last composition — the chorale-prelude *Vor deinem Thron tret ich hiemit*. Einstein states that organically the chorale-prelude has nothing to do with the rest of the music, but was included "so that the buyer would not feel he was getting a bad bargain owing to the incompleteness of the final fugue" (*Musical Quarterly*, July 1937). The interested reader can peruse Hermann Scherchen's analysis of the chorale in the October, 1940, issue of the *Quarterly*.

There is no indication of the instrument or instruments Bach had in mind. Tovey argues for a keyboard instrument, since the work lies quite well under the hands. But the organ version presented here seems to me a not too happy choice. Clarity is the prime requisite, and organ recording is usually troubled by boom and reverberation. Thus it is impossible to differentiate the voices; here the inner voices are often submerged, especially in loud passages, like those of the ninth fugue. Added to the mechanical difficulties is the approach of Biggs, who does not display sufficient imagination. Once he has decided on a certain tempo a mechanized division could not move him, and his only concession is a ritard at the end. Again, the monotonous dynamic level for ten straight discs is more than most listeners will be able to stand.

Those who follow the music with the standard edition—Graeser's—will find some variants in labelling. Victor's idea evidently was to number the fugues numerically as played; and since canons 12-15 and *contrapunctus 17* (an arrangement of 16 for

two claviers) were omitted, Graeser's 18 is numbered 12 here (side 7), since it is the twelfth played. Side 9, labelled *contrapunctus 13*, is really the mirror fugue *contrapunctus 16* (here Biggs, for some reason, elects to play the *inversus* before the *rectus*). Naturally side 10, labelled *contrapunctus 14*, is no. 19 in the Graeser edition. Since Biggs is using that edition, one wonders why the editor's markings were not followed.

There also was a mechanical mistake in the review copy. Side 7, which is supposed to be the conclusion of *contrapunctus 6*, is actually a repetition of the opening fugue (side 1). —H. C. S.

BACH: *Partita No. 5 in G*; played by Walter Giesekeing, piano. Columbia set X-208, two discs, price \$2.50.

▲ This is the *Partita* that Kirkpatrick recorded several years ago for Musicraft. His was a harpsichord rendition; now Giesekeing follows with a first recording for piano. Each has its points, though I would buy the newer if confronted with a choice of one. Giesekeing is so smooth a technician and produces such pleasant sound that his version is much easier to listen to. The harpsichord, of course, is closer to Bach's intentions; and indeed, in music like the *Partitas*, which do not attempt to soar, a good argument can be advanced for its use.

When Giesekeing is the pianist in music of this sort, one is not conscious of any inconsistencies, for the delicacy of his playing and the care he takes to keep the dynamics faithful to the original actually suggest the harpsichord. (Sometimes he takes too much care; the present recording could have profited by a little more dynamic variety.) This requires a control that not many pianists can attain, and leads to a depersonalized, objective type of interpretation. Naturally, Bach can be played in other ways. The inimitable performances of the late Harold Samuel were actually romantic: warm, genial, with colorful pedaling and reflective of the personality of the player. Samuel could get away with it; others who tried to imitate him were horribly awkward and often vulgar.

Five movements make up this *Partita* — a *préambule*, *allemande*, *courante*, *sarabande*, *menuet*, *passapied* and *gigue*. They do not compose one of Bach's very best keyboard works, although there is enough in them to make for pleasurable hearings. Gieseking displays all the virtues enumerated above, and this set must be placed next to his recording of the *Partita in E minor* (No. 6), released in July, 1939. The reproduction here is good, and the noise on the surfaces of the second and fourth sides is not excessively pronounced. —H. C. S.

DEBUSSY: *Arabesques Nos. 1 and 2*; played by José Iturbi, piano. Victor disc 18237, price \$1.00.

▲ Of these pieces Oscar Thompson writes: "Among the earliest works for the piano, dated 1888. This is still music of student character, concise, clear, neatly written, if of no striking quality aside from the impression it yields of an intuitive style... The first slightly adumbrates the effects eventually developed in a more atmospheric style."

Student works though they may be, it is doubtful if any composer of the day could have brought the curiously individual touches that Debussy attained. This in spite of the fact that the forms are definitely not original. Mr. Thompson mentions that the second is Schumannesque, which is true; I wonder if he would agree with me that the first, with its melody appearing over a long arpeggiated line, is very close to certain sections of Bach's *Chromatic Fantasy*.

In August, 1939, Gieseking recorded these compositions for Columbia on a ten-inch disc. Comparing the two versions, one notices little difference in recording, with whatever edge there is going to the present disc. Both have an undue amount of surface noise. The interpretations are strikingly dissimilar. Gieseking plays with more spirit and brings out the melodic line better in the first; Iturbi, who plays beautifully here, is more delicate and ethereal, and the liquid tone and lightness he brings to the second arabesque makes his presentation preferable to me. However, I see no reason why those owning the previous disc should necessarily replace it, unless, of

course, one wishes to own two excellent interpretations. —H. C. S.

ORGAN MUSIC of the 19th and 20th Centuries; played by Joseph Bonnet on the organ of the John Hays Hammond Museum in Gloucester, Mass. Victor set M-835, four discs, price \$4.50.

▲ This set will be treasured more as a souvenir of the artistry of Joseph Bonnet than as a great musical treat. The title of the album suggests music of greater merit than actually is encountered, and aside from Bossi's arrangement of a Belgian air the album will attract organists rather than the average music lover. Bonnet plays compositions by himself, Halfdan Kjerulf, Harry Rowe Shelley, and Seth Bingham. Most of these are new to records.

It is generally agreed that Bonnet is one of the great organ virtuosi of all time. Here he plays a Hammond organ—not,

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◆ All back copies of the magazine are available. Owing to the shortage of copies of certain issues, these are available only at an advanced price. Since the subscription rate, prior to Sept. 1940, was \$2.50 a year, the regular price of back issues is 25c a copy. The premium issues are May, 1935; Nov., 1936; April, July and Nov., 1937; January and July, 1938; Oct. and Nov., 1940; Jan. and Feb., 1941. The price of these issues is 75c a copy. All others can be had at:

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The American Music Lover

45 Fourth Ave., Suite 311, New York City

however, an electric instrument, although the notes state that there are "some bold innovations in the design and tonal structure." The recording is very good, and appears to have less reverberation than in the Biggs set issued this month. It is difficult to say whether this difference is due to the acoustics of the two halls or the instruments employed.

The titles of the works played are: *Lullaby*, by Kjerulf, M. Enrico Bossi's arrangement of the Belgian melody, Shelley's *Spring Song*, Bingham's *Chorale*, and Bonnet's *Romance sans paroles*, *Matin provençal*, the second of *Three Poems of Autumn*, and *In Memoriam* (dedicated to the memory of those who went down with the Titanic). —H. C. S.



Voice

DONIZETTI: *La Fille du Régiment*: *Chacun le sait; Il faut partir; Et mon cœur va changer; Salut à la France*; sung by Lily Pons, soprano, with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra; Pietro Cimara, conductor. Columbia set X-206, two discs, price \$2.50.

▲ The reasons for Lily Pons' affection for Donizetti's harmless little military comedy must be obvious to all who know the opera. Its revival last season was timely enough, and it brought joy both to the *prima donna* and to her public. For her Columbia début she offers four of her arias, and on this occasion, too, I'm sure everyone concerned is going to be very happy. *The Daughter of the Regiment* is hardly Donizetti's most significant work, but then just what is is still an open question. In his own day he was admired as a tragedian—his *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Anna Bolena* and *Polinto* were considered to have the grand manner — but now we know this facet of his art only through

Lucia, which hardly rates with us as a large-scale drama, whatever its virtues may be. At the other end of the rope is the completely farcical *Don Pasquale* (also revived last season) and the gentler *L'Elisir d'Amore* (which is on this year's list). *La Fille du Régiment* lies somewhere in between: a kind of bitter-sweet comedy, whose melodies range from the pathetic to the gay.

Both kinds are to be found in Miss Pons' album. And both sides of the singer's art are happily demonstrated. She is that unusual coloratura soprano with a feeling for a lyrical line and a sense of the underlying meaning of what she is singing. Her bravura is not of the most brilliant; it is rather careful than dazzling, but she has clear ringing high tones, most of which emerge from these recordings round and true. The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, under Cimara, provides satisfactory accompaniments. The surfaces, especially on side three, are unusually noisy.

— P. M.

FLOTOW: *Martha*; *M'appari*; and **GOUNOD:** *Faust*; *Salut, demeure*; sung by Jussi Björling, tenor, with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. Victor disc 13790, price \$1.00.

▲ Jussi Björling is gradually "doing" the tenor repertoire for Victor. And I am afraid that his *M'appari* amounts to just about that. It is not that he sings badly, or that he is guilty of any questionable taste. His performance has that freedom from exaggeration which we have come to expect from him, and which is hardly less strong a reason than his beautiful voice for my admiration for him. But there is not much conviction in the *Martha* air: rather a general impression of tentativeness and a lack of molding in his phrasing. Nor is the *Salut, demeure* one of his best recorded performances. He does not care for the lyric line of the opening section as though the "lowly dwelling" has really touched his heart. The middle section, being more declamatory and dramatic, fares better at his hands, but the *reprise* again lacks the subtle French touch. He attacks the high C valiantly, but is unable to keep the final phrase perfectly steady.

All in all this is one of the lesser discs of an estimable artist. —P. M.

GLUCK: *Alceste: Ab, malgré moi; Non, ce n'est point un sacrifice*; sung by Rose Bampton, soprano, with Victor Symphony Orchestra; Wilfred Pelletier, conductor. Victor disc 18218, price \$1.00.

▲ Last season's novelty at the Metropolitan, the 174-year-old *Alceste*, will not be given again this year, but here is consolation in the form of two of the heroine's arias. I have had a strong feeling ever since the première that neither the opera nor the performance was fully appreciated by either the critics or the public. Of course Marjorie Lawrence as Alcestis sang better in the second performance than in the first, but it was the first that got the space in the papers, and the damage was done. To me her interpretation was amazingly fine, especially considering the wide stylistic gulf between the music of Gluck

and that of the operas she had previously been associated with. And as for the opera itself, it contains some of the most noble and deeply moving music I know.

Miss Bampton, who succeeded Miss Lawrence in later performances, has the honor of introducing two lovely arias to discs. She has neither her predecessor's fire nor the largeness of her conception of the music, but she gives a creditable and musical performance. Since she began her career as a contralto, it is hardly surprising that some of the high attacks bother her a bit, but generally speaking her singing is clean enough. We might wish for clearer diction; indeed, in the higher melodic flights and in the more agitated sections, she practically gives up any attempt to make herself understood. The accompanying orchestra is not of the most refined, and the reproduction of the B-side is by no means as clear as it ought to be. —P. M.

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VIEWS AND REVIEWS

QUARTERLY BOOK-LIST

QUARTERLY RECORD-LIST

"By far the most important of the American periodicals from the point of view of musical scholarship is the *Musical Quarterly*. It is a serious review, cosmopolitan in character, and has published valuable contributions from most of the leading writers of music in Europe and America."—*Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*

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HAHN: *Paysage; Si mes vers avaient des ailes*; sung by Kerstin Thorborg, contralto, with piano accompaniment by Leo Rosenek. Victor 10-inch disc 2174, price \$.75.

▲ Mme. Thorborg is an artist of broad sympathies. It is a surprise to have these Hahn songs from her, though I have often wondered why they had not been more frequently recorded. *Si mes vers avaient des ailes*, whose obvious appropriateness as a radio theme song has not been overlooked, is certainly the composer's most popular work and probably his most facile. Its appeal is direct and simple, and its style shows strongly the influence of Hahn's master, Jules Massenet. The text is by Victor Hugo: "If my poems had wings like a bird, they would fly to your garden; they would fly as sparks to your hearth, if they had wings like the spirit. They would hasten to you day and night, if my poems had wings—like love."

Paysage is a setting of a poem by André Theuriot. Hahn has painted, by means of a graceful melody and a graphic accompaniment, a bright picture of "a forgotten corner of the Breton coast, where I should like to take you some autumn day. There is a pool surrounded by oaks, severe scattered beeches, a deserted mill, and a green spring to mirror your bewitching eyes. The titmouse will sing for us in the morning, and the sea, day and night, will accompany our love songs with its eternal bass."

The contralto's voice takes kindly to the French language, even though she may miss some of its subtle coloring. *Si mes vers* has been done more dreamily — for example by Maggie Teyte — but Thorborg gives it here with a nice sense of line. This song is usually associated with a brighter tone quality and it may lose something in transposition. *Paysage*, on the other hand, is probably at its most effective in Mme. Thorborg's key. It is good to hear it again in so straightforward a performance as this. Mr. Rosenek's accompaniments are well played, and the recording balance is satisfactory.

—P. M.

JOHNSON, arr.: *Honor! Honor!*; and DAWSON: *Talk about a Child that do Love Jesus*; sung by Charles Holland, tenor, with piano accompaniment by Ralph Linsley. Victor 10-inch disc 4556, price \$.75.

▲ This recording is my introduction to the voice of Charles Holland, a very young Negro tenor (formerly a member of the Hall Johnson Choir) with a tone quality strongly reminiscent of Roland Hayes. The songs, too, were unfamiliar to me. The first is an attractive spiritual arranged by Hall Johnson, with the broad and haunting refrain, "Honor! Honor unto the dying Lamb!" *Talk about a Child* appears to be a composed song in the manner of a spiritual by William L. Dawson. The singing in both is free and open. The singer seems to have plenty of power and a serviceable range. Though he belongs to the artistic rather than the natural school of spiritual singing, he does not make his interpretations too arty. Ralph Linsley's piano accompaniments are well in the picture.

—P. M.

LEONCAVALLIO: *Pagliacci — Prologo*; and VERDI: *Rigoletto — Cortigiani, vil razza*; sung by Robert Weede, baritone, with orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Columbia disc 71261-D, price \$1.00.

▲ Not since Tibbett's portrayal of Ford in Verdi's *Falstaff* back in 1921 has any American baritone created the sensation at the Metropolitan Opera that Robert Weede made last winter in the role of Rigoletto. Blessed with a fine voice which has been excellently schooled, Weede here shows his abilities as a singer. If his Rigoletto suggests a younger man than the character is supposed to be, this does not mean that his voicing of anguish or his plea to the courtiers to allow him to go to his daughter is not expressive; the natural youthfulness of his voice should not be altered at this time to accommodate any character, for it is one of his chief assets. Tonio's famous *Prologue* offers Weede no problems; he sings it with fine assurance and ease, encompassing the high tones without effort. Leinsdorf gives the

and
baritone a satisfactory orchestral background in both arias, and the recording is effectively realized. —P. G.

ROSSINI: *La Cenerentola*: *Nacqui all'af-fano*; *Semiramide*: *Bel raggio lusinghier*; sung by Rose Bampton, soprano, with Victor Symphony Orchestra; Wilfred Pelletier, conductor. Victor disc 18217, price \$1.00.

▲ Bravura in music exists for two reasons. It may be intended as a means of dramatic expression (as in the high cackles of Mozart's Queen of the Night) or it may be nothing more than ornamentation or display (as, for instance, in Adam's variations on *Ab, vous dirai-je, Maman?*). Rossini, a great admirer of Mozart, believed in the power of bravura to set forth character and emotion in his operas. Unfortunately he lived in a day when it was taken for granted that the *prima donna* would edit any music she sang to suit her own purposes—a practice which resulted in the most unconscionable liberties. The aria *Bel raggio* is said to have been intended by the composer to show his displeasure with this state of things: we are told that he made the vocal line so brilliant that no further graces could be added. The weakness of the story lies in the fact that graces *can* be added, as those who know Sembrich's recording of the aria are well aware.

But however much Rossini may have resented the ways of his leading ladies, the fact remains that he belonged to their day, and the performance of his music, to be interesting, must have not a little of what they could give it. As music, it begins with mastery of its technical difficulties. It is not enough to sing the notes accurately: for all their floridity, these arias must be treated "conversationally" — not only by articulation of the text, but by the very tone of the singer's voice and by the air with which the roulades and trills are delivered. Such music is a challenge to an ambitious and intelligent singer. Its mastery cannot fail to have a good effect upon whatever else she may choose to sing.

Rose Bampton, in accepting the challenge, is following in the footsteps of Sigrd Onegin and the late Conchita

Supervia. She has not, however, the temperament and flash of the former, nor the fluency of the latter. Neither, I might add, has she the dry and (to me) unpleasant tonal quality of the admired Conchita, the unevenness of registers, or the pronounced unsteadiness. Miss Bampton sings her coloratura very lightly. In fact it is so light that one wonders how it would carry in a large hall. On the record it lacks brilliancy and sparkle. Of the two arias the *Semiramide* comes off with more conviction. Perhaps the association of Rossini's kind of music with the idea of *Cinderella* is a little too much for us today. In any case *Bel raggio* is more important musically, and Miss Bampton comes nearer to its spirit. The recording is good. —P. M.

Other Recordings

DEL RIEGO: *Oh! Dry Those Tears*; and WESTENDORF: *I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen*; sung by James Melton, with Victor Sym. Orch., direction Wilfred Pelletier. Victor disc 18219, \$1.00.

THE MUSIC MART

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DICKENS: *A Christmas Carol*; adapted, produced and narrated by Ernest Chappell; music directed by Lew White; "Scrooge" played by Eustace Wyatt. Victor set G-29, four discs, price \$3.50.

NEVIN: *Mighty Lak' A Rose*; and LANG: *Irish Love Song*; sung by Jessica Drag-onette (soprano) with piano accompaniment by H. Maurice Jacquet. Victor 10-inch disc 2167, price 75c.

GROFE: *On the Trail from Grand Canyon Suite*; played by André Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. Columbia disc 7390-M, price \$1.00.

HANDEL: *Xerxes — Ombra mai fu (Largo)*; and MESSENGER: *La Basoche — Chanson Ancienne*; sung by Richard Bonelli, baritone, with accompaniments by Theodore Paxton. Columbia 10-inch disc 17287-D, price \$.75.

OVERTONES

Charles O'Connell, RCA-Victor Musical Director, states that a work is chosen for recording for one or more of five basic reasons. "First, established public demand. Second, musical importance of the work in question, either from a purely artistic point of view or from a historical viewpoint. Third, the particular ability of a given artist to perform the work in question. Fourth, our belief in the special appeal of the work in question, even though there is no appreciable demand. Finally, the work may be recorded because it incorporates special ideas which we may develop."

Mr. O'Connell says that although public demand is regarded as a weighty reason for the issuance of a work, this should not give people the idea that Victor is purely mercenary. "There are many works of great musical importance, a recording of which cannot be made commercially successful. We feel, nevertheless, that we are in a sense the custodians of great music and that we have a duty to the art which requires us to make permanent as much great music as possible regardless of its commercial success." When correspondence shows a demand for one particular work, serious consideration is given to it. "If the work in question is programmed by one of our artists, our interest becomes very active and we immediately suggest the recording to the artist. Usually he accents the suggestion."

Another source of information on what the public wants is the body of Victor record dealers throughout the country. They play a prominent role in ultimate decisions.

Another reason for the issuance of a Red Seal recording, says Mr. O'Connell, may be the fact that a given artist is widely known for his performance of a certain work or type of work. "For example, Mr. Stokowski has established himself with a very large public for his transcriptions of the music of Bach. Mr. Koussevitzky is particularly conspicuous for his interpre-

tations of the Russian and French school. Mr. Toscanini is regarded as the pre-eminent conductor of the classics. Ezio Pinza more or less specializes in the operatic and song music of Mozart, etc."

The reasons for duplication, according to Victor's Musical Director are the results of definite public demand, too insistent to be neglected, and the fact that as recording technique develops and records improve in quality existing records become obsolete.

"The epidemic of popular songs based on melodies extracted from great orchestral works," continues Mr. O'Connell, "was one of the factors in the genesis of *The Heart of the Symphony* . . . It occurred to us that if people knew these melodies in their diluted and emulsified form, how much more they would love them if they could hear them in the original, without any necessity for listening to or concentrating upon the complete symphony. In other words if we gave people tunes in the original settings designed by the composer, but without elaborations which constitute formal musical construction, it seemed to us that two things could be accomplished. First, we could give people music that they like and, second, we could give them a nodding acquaintance with great music, which might develop into a more serious approach by a greater number of people to the musical masterpieces. Not only is *The Heart of the Symphony* the most popular album of serious music ever issued by Victor, but we have hundreds of reports telling us how acquaintance with it brought about interest in the great symphonies in their complete form. We expect that *The Heart of the Piano Concerto*, a companion set, will bring about parallel results."

* * *

The Primrose String Quartet is headed by a new first violinist. He is Joseph Fuchs, formerly first violinist of the Cleveland Symphony.

The American Music Lover

Fuchs was a prize graduate of the Institute of Musical Art in New York in 1921 and a pupil of Franz Kneisel of the famed Kneisel String Quartet. He replaces Oscar Shumsky, who has become head of the violin department at the Peabody Institute of Music in Baltimore.

The Stuyvesant String Quartet has also a new member, Emanuel Vardi, the young American violist who is regarded as one of the foremost performers on his chosen instrument now before the public. The complete personnel of the Stuyvesant String Quartet is as follows: Sylvan Shulman, first violin; Maurice Wilk, second violin; Emanuel Vardi, viola; and Alan Shulman, cello.

* * *

The following group of records were issued in England this past month.

DUPARC: *Exase*; and SZULC: *Clair de lune*; Maggie Teyte, soprano, with Gerald Moore at the piano. H.M.V. DB5937.

DUPARC: *Chanson Triste*; and arr. FERRARI: *Auprès de ma Blonde; Il était une Bergère; Au clair de la lune*; Sophie Wyss, soprano. Decca M497.

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 1 in D major*, Op.

60; Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by V. Talich. H.M.V. DB8879/83.

MOZART: *Sonata in F major*, K. 332, and *Romance in A flat*, K. Anh. 205; Eileen Joyce, piano. Columbia DX1034/35.

PURCELL-TATE: *The Blessed Virgin's Exposition*; Isobel Baillie, soprano with Arnold Goldborough at the organ. Columbia DX1031.

PURCELL-WOOD: *Suite in Five Movements*; Sir Henry Wood and the Queen's Hall Orch. Decca K975/76.

SIBELIUS: *Den Forsta Kyssen*, Op. 37, No. 1; *Varen Flyktar Hastigt*, Op. 13, No. 4; *Saf. Saf. Susa*, Op. 36, No. 4. (Decca disc M503). *Sen Har Jag Ej Fragat Mera*, Op. 17, No. 1; *Var Fornimmelser*, Op. 86, No. 1; *Demanten Pa Marssnon*, Op. 36, No. 6. (Decca disc M504). *Men Min Fogel Marks Dock Icke*, Op. 36, No. 2; *Vilse*, Op. 17, No. 4; *Lastu Lainehilla*, Op. 17, No. 7. (Decca disc M505). Florence Weise, contralto, with Daniel Kelly at the piano.

Loch Lomond, and *The Road to the Isles* (H. M.V. disc DB952); and *Sacred Song: Mother of God*, and (a) *Polish National Anthem*, (b) *Song of Warsaw* (H.M.V. disc DB953). Sung by the Polish Army Choir.



IN THE POPULAR VEIN VAN NORMAN

AAAA—*Caprice XXIV Paganini*; and *I'm Here*. Benny Goodman and his Orchestra. Columbia 36411.

• Paganini's 24th Caprice has probably been used more frequently by other composers than any theme ever written. Schumann and Liszt used it; upon it Brahms based his *Paganini Variations* and Rachmaninoff his *Rhapsody* for piano and orchestra. Therefore, when Benny Goodman commissions his Mr. Martin to make a swing arrangement of it, said Mr. Martin is bucking some rather stiff competition. It may be stated at once that it turns out quite brilliantly,

and should take its place, we imagine, as about the most successful of all the "swing classics." The outstanding impression one receives is the fine job of recording Columbia has done on it. Tonally, the disc just about knocks you off your feet. After you recover a bit, you begin to realize that the work has been consummately put together and, as one has a right to expect with Goodman, superbly performed.

AAAA—*Fiji's Rhapsody*; and *It's Only a Paper Moon*. John Kirby and his Orchestra. Victor 27598.

• John Kirby and his little group here func-

tion with all the slick efficiency of a precision machine. This is, of course, an old habit of Kirby and his ensemble, but in this most imperfect of worlds it is a pleasure to discuss anything that approaches sheer perfection as closely as does the work of this tightly-knit little band. *Fif's Rhapsody* sets off its (the band's) best qualities to excellent advantage. The music is an original by Charlie Shaver and is more or less made to order for Kirby. Much less appealing is the rendition of Harold Arlen's *It's Only a Paper Moon*, which is probably the least distinguished tune that this writer has ever turned out.

AAA—*Moonlight Masquerade*; and *Orange Blossom Lane*. Claude Thornhill and his Orchestra. Columbia 36391.

• Without wishing to retract the possibly extravagant praise that we lavished on the Thornhill band in a previous issue, it appears that they already, in the space of a few months, are in the danger of getting in a rut. The excellent qualities of the band are by now too obvious to be mentioned. But no matter how excellent a band may be, it can scarcely hope to endear itself permanently with the public if it uses the same tempo for everything it plays. Not only the same tempo, in fact, but the same treatment in almost every detail. True, this helps to identify the band in the public mind, but we think Thornhill and Columbia would be well advised to issue a few fast novelties like *Portrait of a Guinea Farm* to relieve the monotony. *Moonlight Masquerade*, the better of the two numbers here, is a rather tasteless adaptation of the popular Albeniz *Tango in D*, with a particularly revolting lyric, but the tune itself is so lovely that nothing can destroy its beauty, and Thornhill does an undeniably swell job on it.

AAA—*Says Who? Says You, Says I*; and *This Time the Dream's on Me*. Glenn Miller and his Orchestra. Bluebird B-11315.

• No sooner had we regretfully noticed the apparent disappearance of Harold Arlen from the Hollywood scene when the first records from a new Warner Bros. musical, *Blues in the Night*, appear with songs by Arlen and Johnny Mercer, a fine lyric-writer. This is what might be termed a potent song-writing team. Mercer's prowess is too well known to bear comment here. Suffice it to say that any songs emanating from such a team should be Grade A—and they are. *Says Who?* has a sparkle and dash in both words and music that is captured all too infrequently while *This Time the Dream's on Me* is a ballad that grows more attractive with each hearing. Miller's recording of both is effective, musicianly (as Miller always is) and fresh.

AAA—*Frankie Carle Encores*. Columbia set C-70. Price \$2.50.

• Paralleling, if not quite equaling, the success of the Carmen Cavallaro and Eddie Duchin

piano recordings have been those of Frankie Carle, an utterly different type of pianist. The former pair, while they differ in many respects, provide the listener with the musical equivalent of a marshmallow dipped in maple syrup. Carle gives a bit sturdier fare. While his style is far removed from the savageries of boogie-woogie, it is unusually removed from the adolescent swoonings of a Duchin. In other words, he really beats it out, but in an engaging, facile style that you can't help but like. His first album, released last year without much fanfare, has done excellently from the sales standpoint, justifying the second volume. Included are *Somebody Loves Me*, *I Know That You Know*, *Swingin' Down the Lane*, *The Love Nest*, *I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me*, *After You're Gone*, *The One I Love Belongs to Somebody Else*, and *Sweet and Lovely*.

Other Current Popular Recordings of Merit

AAA—*Tropical Magic*; and *It Happened in Hawaii*. Jimmy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Decca 4034.

AAA—*Stop! The Red Light's On*; and *Who Can I Turn To?* Gene Krupa and his Orchestra. Okeh 6411.

AAA—*Jealous*; and *Rancho Pillow*. Andrews Sisters with Vic Schoen and his Orchestra. Decca 4019.

AAA—*Your Words and My Music*; and *You'll Never Know*. Larry Clinton's Bluebird Orchestra. Bluebird B-11318.

AAA—*It Had to Be You*; and *Yellow Fire*. Earl Hines and his Orchestra. Bluebird B-11308.

AAA—*49th Street Jive*; and *Big Time Crip*. Andy Kirk and his Clouds of Joy. Decca 4042.

AAA—*I Can't Quit That Man*; and *Last Mile Blues*. Ida Cox and her All-Star Orchestra. Okeh 6405.

AAA—*You're Driving Me Crazy*; and *Blue Prelude*. Shep Fields and his New Music. Bluebird B-11312.

AA—*A Gav Ranchero*; and *Something New*. Bob Crosby and his Orchestra. Decca 4028.

AA—*Make Love to Me*; and *The Birth of the Blues*. Teddy Powell and his Orchestra. Bluebird B-11300.

AA—*Sad Sap Sucker Am I*; and *Rump Steak Serenade*. "Fats" Waller and his Rhythm. Bluebird B-11296.

AA—*By-U By-O*; and *So Shy*. Freddy Martin and his Orchestra. Bluebird B-11293.

AA—*I Got It Bad and That Ain't Good*; and *Harvard Square*. Vaughn Monroe and his Orchestra. Bluebird B-11310.

AA—*Let Me Off Uptown*; and *Take the "A" Train*. Delta Rhythm Boys. Decca 8578.

AA—*You Were There*; and *Mother Fuzzy*. Charlie Barnett and his Orchestra. Bluebird B-11321.

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